The Communist

10c. APRIL 1940

PEACE IN FINLAND:
A DECISIVE SETBACK TO THE INCENDIARIES OF A NEW WORLD WAR

(AN EDITORIAL)

BOURGEOIS ECONOMIC POLICY VS. DEMANDS OF THE MASSES

(REVIEW OF THE MONTH)

THE WAR AIMS OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

THE NEGRO PEOPLE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

THEODORE R. BASSETT AND A. W. BERRY

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE MARXIST BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH FOR APRIL!

STALIN

Many of the outstanding leaders of the Soviet Union have contributed to make this book a comprehensive evaluation of Stalin's contributions and his historic role in establishing socialism on one-sixth of the earth.

Stalin's work in many spheres, as a military leader and strategist during the intervention and in building the Red Army and Navy; in developing socialist industry and collectivizing agriculture; in successfully launching and fulfilling the Five-Year Plans of socialist construction; in the solution of the national question of the U.S.S.R.; in charting the course of socialist democracy as embodied in the Stalinist Constitution of the U.S.S.R.; in shaping and guiding the peace policy of the Soviet Union; and, above all, his magnificent contributions to Marxist-Leninist theory, are dealt with in this book by his closest co-workers.

Among the contributors are V. M. Molotov, Klementi Voroshilov, L. M. Kaganovich, Georgi Dimitroff, M. M. Kalinin, A. Andreyev, L. Beria, and others.

192 pages. Cloth bound

Price 75 cents

WORKERS LIBRARY PUBLISHERS

P. O. Box [illegible] Station D, New York, N. Y.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

VOL. XIX, No. 4 APRIL, 1940

THE COMMUNIST

A MAGAZINE OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MARXISM-LENINISM
PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE U.S.A.
EDITOR: EARL BROWDER

CONTENTS

Peace in Finland: A Decisive Setback for the Incendiaries of a New World War	*Editorial*	291
Review of the Month	*A. B.*	296
Resolution on the *Daily Worker*	*National Committee, C.P.U.S.A.*	306
The War Aims of American Imperialism	*William Z. Foster*	308
The Negro People and the Struggle for Peace	*Theodore R. Bassett and A. W. Berry*	320
Shifting Political Alignments in Ohio	*John Williamson*	336
The Organization of an Election Campaign	*Israel Amter*	344
Charles Emil Ruthenberg: Fighter Against Imperialist War	*Oakley Johnson*	350
The Renaissance of Nationalities and the Consolidation of Nations in the U.S.S.R.	*M. Chekalin*	356
Book Review *Dividends to Pay*, by E. D. Kennedy	*Theodore Miller*	376

Entered as second class matter November 2, 1927, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Send checks, money orders and correspondence to THE COMMUNIST, *P. O. Box 148, Sta. D (50 E. 13th St.), New York. Subscription rates: $1.00 for six months; foreign and Canada $2.50 a year. Single copies 20 cents.*

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW PAMPHLETS

●

IS THIS A WAR FOR FREEDOM?
By Ernst Fischer, 10c.

LENIN AND KRUPSKAYA
By C. Bobrovskaya, 10c.

THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE WARMAKERS
By Earl Browder, 5c.

THE WAR CRISIS: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
By William Z. Foster, 5c.

SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY AND THE WAR
By V. J. Jerome, 5c.

ROOSEVELT HEADS FOR WAR
By William Z. Foster, 10c.

THE WAR AND THE WORKING CLASS OF THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES
By Georgi Dimitroff, 2c.

A NEGRO LOOKS AT WAR
By John Henry Williams, 3c.

I DIDN'T RAISE MY BOY TO BE A SOLDIER— FOR WALL STREET
By Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, 1c.

●

WORKERS LIBRARY PUBLISHERS
P. O. Box 148, Station D
New York City

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PEACE IN FINLAND: A DECISIVE SETBACK FOR THE INCENDIARIES OF A NEW WORLD WAR

(EDITORIAL)

THE month of March brought peace in Finland. On March 12, a peace treaty was signed at Moscow, which ended fourteen weeks of fighting. This was an event of major historic significance. It is a turning point in the course of international relations. It has had repercussions in every country, throughout the world, and has changed the political face of the world. Every passing day reveals new aspects of the far-reaching significance of the settlement of the Soviet-Finnish issues.

Certain outstanding features are already clear as to the significance of the hostilities in Finland and the peace treaty which brought them to a close. We enumerate only the most important and far-reaching, as follows:

1. The British-French imperialists failed in their efforts to drag Scandinavia into the war; they lost one of their chief strategical bases upon which they had built their long-term plans.

2. It has become, as a consequence, much more difficult to execute the British-French-American orientation of transforming the present war into a general world war, and of redirecting it mainly against the Soviet Union.

3. It has created better conditions for peace in the whole of Europe.

4. It has greatly stimulated and encouraged the peace forces of every country; it has created more favorable conditions for defeating the war plans of the Hoovers and Roosevelts and preventing the entry of the United States into the war.

5. It has perfected the defenses of the Soviet Union against the projected "holy war" of the world bourgeoisie, and has simultaneously proved the superiority of the Red Army, representing the new socialist society, over the military forces of decaying capitalism.

6. It demonstrated to the masses of all nations the principle contrast between the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, on the one hand, which is consistently directed toward peace and good relations between nations, and, on the other hand, the policy of conquest and subjugation of all the imperialist powers.

* * *

It is no longer open to the slightest doubt, it has indeed been openly

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

admitted by Allied spokesmen, that the Mannerheim-Ryti-Tanner government in Finland had been long prepared as one of the major war bases of Anglo-French imperialism. It was thrown into action against the Soviet Union as a diversion, as an instrument to drag the Soviet Union into the war, and as a means of making Scandinavia a major battlefield with Germany. It was further an essential feature of larger plans, involving the Balkans and the Near East. Anglo-French "grand strategy" looked toward the "Northern front" and the "Southeastern front" as the keys to a victory against Germany which would transform that country into the chief instrument of war against the Soviet Union. The Mannerheim Line, built under the direct supervision of the British General Kirk, was the last word in military science of the capitalist world, an improvement on the Maginot Line; it was firmly believed to be impregnable to any conceivable attack by those who conceived and financed it. It was the iron boot of imperialism thrust into the front door of the land of socialism.

The unbelievably rapid penetration of the Mannerheim Line by the Red Army (the actual operation took only about three weeks), with the immediate capitulation of the Finnish military adventurers—enemies of the Finnish people no less than of the Soviet Union—has thrown the "grand strategy" of Allied imperialism into confusion. Scandinavia has been saved, at least for the present, from a ruinous and senseless participation in the war. Balkan and Near Eastern countries, playing the dangerous game of No. 10 Downing Street, have been given the most serious pause. The imperialist antagonists have been thrown back again to face one another on the Western Front, over the Siegfried and Maginot Lines, where the fighting is confined to scouting patrols and the casualties have been less than automobile fatalities on American highways.

* * *

The collapse of the Allied satraps in Finland thus multiplies the difficulties that face the British-French governments in spreading the war, and in redirecting it against the Soviet Union. If the German rulers even last year thought twice and finally rejected the project, urged upon them by Chamberlain and Daladier, of trying their teeth on the Soviet Union, it may be expected that in the light of recent events they will think three times. Nor have the lessons been lost upon the other, neutral, governments. All these factors, which brought Chamberlain's policy to open bankruptcy last August, have now been much re-enforced. Not even the active entry of Roosevelt into the diplomatic scene, to throw American influence into the scale to salvage the bankrupt policy, can counter-balance these tremendous setbacks.

* * *

The most immediate and general result of these developments has been to create improved conditions for peace in the whole of Europe. The illusion offered their peoples by the British-French imperialists

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of a decisive military victory gained largely at the cost of weaker nations, has been blown away like fog before a stiff gale. The war plans have stalled in a blind alley. The imperialist military relations have been exposed as a stalemate. Not even the prospect of American intervention as a belligerent (a prospect which was weakened with the disappearance of the "Northern front") holds any immediate hope of fundamentally changing this situation.

* * *

From the new situation thus brought about by the brilliant victory of the Red Army over Mannerheim, and by the nature of the resulting peace treaty, has come a strong stimulus and encouragement to the peace forces of the world. This has already found most significant expression, in the last days of March, in declarations of several important British trade unions, meeting in congresses, which have denounced the war as imperialistic in character and demanded its immediate cessation. The Cabinet crisis in France reflects a confusion and panic among the bourgeoisie which can only be understood against the background of a rising militant demand for peace from French workers, peasants and soldiers. Peace has become an immediate and practical demand, among the masses of all belligerent countries, as a result of the obvious collapse of war plans.

Similar results can be seen in the United States. Herbert Hoover, outstanding leader of the drive to drag our country into an adventure in support of Mannerheim and his masters, has quickly stepped out of the limelight for the present, and would desire to hand over to his rival in warmongering, Roosevelt, the full "credit" for the debacle of the war plans. The Gallup Institute of Public Opinion and other polls uniformly register a growing determination of the American masses to keep out of this imperialist war. The rival bourgeois political camps, which had agreed to keep the war issue out of their preliminary struggles for the 1940 elections, are beginning to break their truce again, and try to speculate again on the peace issue in a demagogic manner. Peace organizations and activities multiply apace. Clearly the American workers are better prepared now than before to resist all efforts of the Hoovers and the Roosevelts to take the U. S. into the war.

* * *

For the Soviet Union, the settlement in Finland has perfected its military defenses against any and all possible imperialist military adventurers. The last possibility of a *blitzkrieg* against the vital centers of the land of socialism has been eliminated. This factor is itself one of the greatest contributions to peace. It removes a serious temptation from under the noses of various imperialist bourgeois groups.

The Red Army of the Soviet Union has proved in life its military superiority over the military forces of capitalism. This is a most dreadful thought to the capitalists and all their retainers, who have been consoling themselves with the idea that whenever they found it necessary they could dispose of the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Soviet Union by military means, all others failing. It is such a dreadful thought they refuse to admit it, and continue hysterically to repeat the puerile legends of their hired scribblers about the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the Red Army. But the stubborn facts remain that the Red Army accomplished tasks which bourgeois military science declares are impossible, and the like of which therefore no bourgeois general staff would attempt. It is axiomatic to bourgeois military science that a large-scale military offensive is impossible during heavy winter weather, even in temperate climes; the Red Army made such an offensive successfully in the North, and even in the Arctic. It was an axiom since the World War that modern fortifications cannot be taken by frontal assault, except possibly by prolonged sacrifice of immensely superior numbers; the Red Army took the Mannerheim Line in three weeks with a minimum of losses. Such a revolution in military science renders obsolete all the textbooks on the subject. It demonstrates at the same time the achievements of the socialist economy which equipped and served the Red Army. The superiority of socialist over capitalist economy, the superiority of the men trained under socialism over the men demoralized by capitalism, was demonstrated by the fall of the Mannerheim Line and the peace treaty between the Soviet Union and Finland.

* * *

Finally, the terms of the peace treaty demonstrate the contrast between the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and that of imperialist states. American bourgeois commentators have expressed their astonishment that the Soviet Union, as the result of decisive military success, made peace at the earliest possible moment, and on terms which gained for the Soviet Union only those measures of security against attack required by the world situation. No burdens whatever have been placed upon the Finnish people by the Soviet Union; on the contrary, they have been relieved of the millstone placed around their neck by the Mannerheims and Tanners, of military servitude to British-French-American imperialism. When the Finnish people fully free themselves from that domination by foreign imperialism that is represented by the Mannerheims and Tanners, and develop friendly collaboration with the Soviet Union, they will more and more share in the results of the security and prosperity that have been realized by the Soviet Union—invincible as she is today.

* * *

British-French-American imperialists will not give up their efforts to extend the war, and to turn it against the Soviet Union. Scandinavia is not entirely safe, as demonstrated by the current talk of a Finnish-Swedish-Norwegian military alliance against the Soviet Union, which originates in London. Herbert Hoover continues to speak for the decisive sections of Wall Street, and Roosevelt still vies with him for reactionary support. Under the blows that have shattered their

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

war plans, and roused a great peace movement among the masses, the imperialist bourgeoisie may resort to even more desperate adventures. The workers and all the toiling people, who have nothing to gain from this war, who really hate war, who want peace above all else, must be more than ever alert, must take advantage of the more favorable conditions created by the achievements of the Soviet Union; in the neutral countries must halt and defeat all moves to drag them into the war, and in the belligerent countries begin a decisive movement for an immediate and general peace.

These are the main lessons from the outstanding events on the international scene during the month of March.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

REVIEW OF THE MONTH

What Has Happened to the Economic Crisis of 1937? Current Business Trends and War Effects. Jobs and Unemployment. Bourgeois Economic Policy Versus Demands of Masses. Needed: More Concentrated Mass Struggle During Present Congressional Session. Republicans and Democrats Debate Seventh Anniversary of Roosevelt Administration. What Made New Deal Possible? Emerging Working Class Independence and Democratic Front Process. Special Position of Roosevelt Administration. Limitations of Bourgeois Democracy. Partial Demands and Transitional Perspective. A New Variety of Social-Democratism. Stalin and Creative Marxism. Towards the National Nominating Convention.

THE sharp drop in industrial production from December to April, estimated at between 18 and 23 per cent, has naturally produced a number of serious consequences. The most important one is the great increase of unemployment which is now over twelve million. According to the C.I.O. *Economic Outlook*, unemployment in January was 14 per cent higher than in December.

It is possible, as is forecast in various quarters, that the decline may come to a stop in April or May. That is very uncertain. What is certain, however, is that the steep rise in production during the last four months of 1939 has not lifted the economy altogether out of the 1937 economic crisis, although it did modify the course of that crisis in several important respects.

This will be seen by a comparison of the Federal Reserve Board's index of annual industrial production for the last four years. This index stood at 105 in 1936 and 110 in 1937. It dropped to 86 in 1938 and rose again to 105 in 1939. Thus we are back again at the annual level of 1936 and 5 points lower than in 1937. On the face of these figures alone, it would be possible to say that during 1939, in the latter half of that year, business was *beginning* to emerge from the economic crisis which started around October, 1937. Whether it has actually and fully emerged, is still an open question.

Further reinforcement for this judgment is found in a comparative estimate of production indices in terms of 1929, the foregoing percentages being based on the years 1923-25 as 100.

Thus the annual production index in 1936 was 88.1 per cent of 1929 and in 1937 it was 92.2. It dropped to 72 per cent in 1938, rising to 89.2 in 1939. In other words, the average total of industrial production last year was still almost eleven per cent below that of 1929.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Even more revealing are the comparative figures for the production of durable and non-durable goods, on the one hand, and a comparison of private and public investments, on the other. According to the annual survey of the Commerce Department, production of new investment goods in 1939, including government expenditures, formed a smaller part of the national income than was usual in the 'twenties or even in 1936 and 1937. It therefore characterizes the business improvement from the middle of 1938 to the end of 1939 as a "consumption recovery." Which is merely a less alarming way of saying that there was no normal or usual recovery from the 1937 economic crisis.

Further examination of the true nature of this "consumption" recovery, in which over one-third of the nation had very little to consume, discloses the following facts: Private expenditures for new durable goods in 1939 were 18 per cent higher than in 1938 but still 10 per cent *under* 1937 and 33 per cent below 1929. Thus one of the chief *normal* factors for overcoming a cyclical economic crisis, *i.e.*, rising capital investments for the production of new durable goods, was operating in 1939 to a relatively insignificant extent. On the other hand, government expenditures for public works in 1939 were $3,832,000,000 as compared with $3,359,000,000 in 1938 and $2,789,000,000 in 1937. Yet with all that, the *combined total* of public and private expenditures in 1939 for new durable goods was 4 per cent less than in 1937 and 25 per cent less than in 1929.

To this must be added the important fact that the export of goods in 1939 was still below that of 1937 although higher than in 1938, while the export of capital continued practically non-existent.

As to the export of goods, it is necessary to remember that the really significant increases took place only in the last three months of 1939, clearly reflecting the effects of the war and its one-sided influences upon American economy and the course of the economic crisis. This has become so plain that it is by now universally recognized. The war has boosted certain industries while depressing others, doing to agriculture as a whole more damage than good.

It is therefore evident that the 1937 economic crisis has not yet been overcome, by far. But the outbreak of the war has modified in several respects its course. The war has greatly intensified the *unevenness* in the course of the crisis as between various branches of industry and between industry and agriculture. It has also intensified what bourgeois economists like to call the "disproportions" between the rate and volume of accumulation of capital and its investment, not only at home but also abroad, the export of capital. The war has therefore greatly sharpened the struggle of American imperialism for markets, sources of raw material, for spheres of influence and capital exports, for strategic naval and military positions.

Life is fully confirming the conclusion made by Comrade Stalin in

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

March, 1939, "that capitalism will have far less resources at its disposal for a normal way out of the present crisis than during the preceding crisis." (*Ibid.*, p. 7.) Hence, the more militant imperialists in the United States are steadily dragging this country into the war as a way out of the crisis, while continually shifting to the masses the burden of the crisis and of war preparations. And capitalist political reaction is hardening.

In the face of this situation, and of the stiffening opposition of the masses to the imperialist, war-making and reactionary policies of the bourgeoisie, it is profitable to examine a few of the latest examples of bourgeois economic thought. Some of it came to expression at the Eastern Regional Conference of the American Bankers Association early in March, where a group of economists presented what might be called a common platform. And what does it say?

First, it seeks to impress the bourgeoisie with the idea that, whatever successes may be achieved in the sphere of imperialist expansion abroad, the main job of bringing about economic recovery must be done at home. It is stated in these words:

"Despite a reasonable expectation that exports will increase somewhat because of the war, it must be recognized that recovery remains primarily a domestic problem." (*The New York Times*, March 8.)

This sounds almost like the position of progressive labor and of its allies, a position which says that the problem of economic recovery is a problem of tackling and solving the domestic economic, social and political problems. It sounds like it, but is not that at all. The platform of these bourgeois economists proceeds from the assumption that the present-day sharp struggle of the American bourgeoisie for imperialist expansion is legitimate, good and desirable for the American people, only these economists do not believe that this imperialist struggle promises much in the immediate future. Whereas progressive labor and its allies are highly critical of the imperialist moves of the bourgeoisie, demonstrating an ever clearer and firmer opposition to these imperialist moves and policies as being *against* the fundamental interests of the working people, as being most instrumental in dragging this country into the war.

But that is not all. Taking up specifically the domestic problems and their solution, the "platform" sees the main problem as being one of "stimulating" the investment of "venture capital." That too may sound like what progressive labor and the toiling farmers want. Especially as these bourgeois economists base themselves on the universally recognized facts that "the industrial machine is operating in low gear. Unemployment is high. Excess reserves and idle funds are accumulating." But what is their solution? And here we find the full reactionary essence of the "platform."

It proposes "removing the penalties that the present tax system extracts from gains arising from such [private] enterprises," "to reduce somewhat the rate of taxation in the highest brackets of income, and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to reduce the corporate tax." Furthermore, "to prevent social security payments from growing . . . it is desirable that such payments be supported by income taxes collected on such a broad base that the electorate would be conscious of the cost whenever it increased." And, finally, "the Wagner Labor Relations Act should be made an act of industrial peace rather than an act of industrial conflict." Clearly, this is the direction of present-day bourgeois policy and no one, we hope, will be misled into the belief that there is anything in common between this "platform" and the aspirations of labor and its allies as embodied for example in the Legislative Program of the C.I.O.

Significantly enough, the "platform" of this group of bourgeois economists says little about the increasingly acute problems of immediate relief to the more than twelve million unemployed, to the toiling farmers and to youth. It takes no note of the known fact that the W.P.A. rolls for March carried no more than about two million people and that if no more funds are provided by Congress than was asked by President Roosevelt, the rolls of the W.P.A. will be cut to less than one million by July.

Yes, this group of reactionary bourgeois economists has found it expedient to overlook these facts. Perhaps that is because the "liberal" economists in the New Deal Administration are also trying to overlook these very same facts, although not very successfully. Yet the capitalist press has already begun to fire away at what they call the "danger" of a revival of government spending. Already an attack is being unfolded against the possibility that the Government may be compelled by the masses to ask Congress for additional appropriations for relief, although there are still very few signs that the Government will do it, let alone make a fight for it.

It has to be said with great emphasis that the mass struggle for the Legislative Program of the C.I.O., which embodies the main progressive demands of the masses to cope with the present situation, has not yet assumed the necessary scope, firmness and energy. The mass struggles are unfolding, of this there can be no doubt. And these struggles are proceeding along the lines of demands contained in the C.I.O. program, embracing the workers in the A. F. of L., in the C.I.O., growing numbers of unorganized workers, the progressive youth, sections of farmers, of Negroes and of working women. But these struggles are as yet insufficiently coordinated and united. They still lack the force requisite to impress Congress and the Government.

It would be an error to take a narrow view of the C.I.O. Legislative Program as being only a fighting document for the 1940 elections. Of course, it is that. And for that reason it is also a platform of struggle *for today, and every day,* a platform of struggle *during the present session of Congress.*

Consequently, it devolves upon the trade unions, the farm organizations, the Workers Alliance, the youth organizations, the Negro organizations to carry through a more

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thorough mobilization of the masses for daily struggle on all fronts in order to secure action by Congress *now*, at this *present* session. This promises not only practical results in the coming weeks but it will also prepare most effectively the widest masses of the people for the election struggle in November.

* * *

THERE was something unreal in the debate between the Republicans and Democrats on the eve of the seventh anniversary of President Roosevelt's first inauguration. And it wasn't so much in *what* they said as in the practical meaning of their words in the light of the new realignment of class forces now taking place.

For example, Senator Barkley insisted that:

"No other similar period, and no other Administration, regardless of political persuasion, has accomplished so much; and in my opinion none will."

To which Senator McNary had a ready reply. Namely:

"Seven years of the New Deal leave our major national problem of unemployment still unsolved . . . our farmers without either sufficient markets or satisfactory prices . . . our heavy industries in stagnation."

Both are right in what they said on this occasion. Yet both of them speak fundamentally for the capitalist class, for the imperialist bourgeoisie of the United States, which is unfolding a reactionary offensive against the masses of the people and which the people must unite to resist and combat.

It is beyond dispute that during the last seven years the American working class and its allies have made significant gains both economically and politically. Perhaps as in no other similar period. But why was it so? Senator Barkley does not touch the real reason. To him it was because his party and President Roosevelt have been in power. But it isn't quite that simple. The real and main reason was the rise of the masses to political consciousness and, most particularly, *the emergence of the working class as an independent political force. It was this upsurge of the* masses against reaction and monopoly oppression, reinforced by the growing political assertiveness and independence of labor, that made the New Deal Administration possible. *It was the struggle of the masses along the lines of the democratic front policy,* a policy which supported the progressive features of the New Deal and cemented a people's front of opposition to reaction and to the reactionary opponents of the New Deal, that is responsible for the significant and important gains made by the people in the last seven years.

That does not in the least ignore *the special position* of the Roosevelt Administration in the democratic front process. It did occupy in this process a special position, the position of *bourgeois* democrats in an *anti-fascist* people's front process, during a certain period in the life of the country and of the world. That was the period when, as part of the world offensive of fascism,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

monopoly capital in the United States, the most reactionary section of finance capital, was "utilizing the developing economic crisis, which it has itself hastened and aggravated, as the basis for a major attack against the rising labor and democratic movements." (*Resolution of the Tenth Convention of the Communist Party of the U. S.*)

Because of this objective situation, in which bourgeois democrats too found themselves under attack by reaction, a certain class lineup of forces was crystallizing, a lineup which brought the bourgeois democrats into temporary relationships and collaboration with the democratic front process of the masses of the people. And that was the special position of the Roosevelt Administration in the anti-monopoly and anti-fascist movements of the masses.

This Administration of *bourgeois democrats engaged for a while in* combating certain features in the offensive of the most reactionary sections of finance capital. And in this it was bolstered up and supported by the mass movements. But these bourgeois democrats were combating reaction (when they did) in order to save capitalism and in order to check the advance of the independent movements of labor and its allies. *Hence, the inconsistencies and contradictions* in the policies and acts of the Roosevelt Administration. These inconsistencies and contradictions, which stemmed from the fact that these were *bourgeois* democrats, the mass movements, on the whole, did not support. The more advanced sections of the democratic front process were *combating* these contradictions and inconsistencies.

From this class characteristic of bourgeois democrats it is clear why they so easily and "naturally" began to swing over to the camp of militant imperialism and capitalist reaction following the outbreak of the war and the consequent new realignments nationally and internationally. In this new situation, the *bourgeois* was beginning to get the best of the democrat as is perhaps inevitable for most bourgeois democrats when the choice is between imperialism and war or anti-imperialism and peace. And that is why now, in the new situation, the American working class and its allies have to carry forward the struggle for their fundamental interests without the Roosevelts and against them. They have to carry forward the struggle, with the policy of the anti-imperialist people's front, for the preservation of the gains made in the past seven years, for the extension of these gains in the new situation by fighting against imperialism and war, against capitalist reaction, exposing the desertion and betrayal of the people's cause by the bourgeois democrats.

In the experiences of the past seven years, ever larger masses of the American people are beginning to see more or less clearly the *basic limitations* of bourgeois democracy in the present epoch. When Senator McNary says that seven years of New Deal policies have not solved the unemployment question, have not lifted the heavy industries from stagnation, have given the farmer neither sufficient markets nor satis-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

factory prices, he is not inventing anything. He is just stating a fact which labor and its allies have pointed out many times before. But *why* this failure of the New Deal Administration? According to the Republican McNary it was because of the *progressive* features of the New Deal, precisely those that made life more tolerable for the masses; whereas, as a matter of plain truth, it was because the New Deal was not *sufficiently* progressive, because it was grounded in capitalism and sought to save capitalism, because it feared the masses and sought to check their independent movements.

In brief: the inability and failure of the Roosevelt Administration to solve radically the economic ills of our system; to do away with imperialism and imperialist war; to provide jobs, security, democracy and peace for the people; these failures result not from the progressivism of the Administration but from its *bourgeois* democratism, from its attachment to capitalism. And from this standpoint, the Republican Party, which throughout these seven years has been the spearhead of capitalist reaction and monopoly domination, has nothing on the Roosevelt Administration. It continues as much the enemy of the people as it has been.

* * *

THAT wide sections of the American working people are beginning to see some of the basic limitations of bourgeois democracy, as a result of their experiences in the past seven years, can be glimpsed even from such inadequate and distorted reflectors as the *Fortune* survey of public opinion, and similar ones. In its March survey, *Fortune* reports that 5.2 per cent, calculated at almost four million adults, subscribed to the following position:

"The systems of private capitalism and democracy are breaking down, and we might as well accept the fact that sooner or later we shall have to have a new form of government."

This is significant, isn't it? But of equal, if not greater, significance is an affirmative answer to another question. It is this:

"Do you think the government should provide for all people who have no other means of obtaining a living?"

To this question, 65.1 per cent answered: *Yes.* An overwhelming majority of Americans.

But the *Fortune* surveyors did not stop with that. They proceeded to press another question:

"Would you still be in favor of this if it meant the end of the capitalistic system?"

To which 13 per cent answered: *Yes.* In other words, 13 per cent of American adults want to see things done by the Government that "should provide for all people who have no other means of obtaining a living" even if this should lead to the abolition of capitalism.

Certainly, the experiences of the masses during the past seven years at home, and the lessons of the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, are producing results of the most far-reaching importance for

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the future of our people. There is no doubt that already at this juncture the majority of the American people are ready to support *fundamental* measures for freeing the country from the stranglehold of the monopolies and for providing social security for the masses. This readiness is still enveloped in a fog of illusions. For example: that the job can be made complete and lasting just by removing "certain basic services and commodities from the domain of private monopoly," by the "socialization of definite segments of industry" on the basis of bourgeois democracy and without overstepping its bounds. This is an illusion which is bound to become dissipated in the course of struggle for the *partial* and *transitional* demands of the masses under revolutionary leadership, just as many other illusions bred by capitalism and Social-Democratism are now being dissipated.

The masses will continue to learn that the inherent limitations of bourgeois democracy are such as will not allow the complete and lasting realization of those fundamental measures for freedom from monopoly domination and for social security which the majority of the American people already favor; that in the course of struggle for these measures the masses will have to go *beyond* the confines of bourgeois democracy, initiating a more *advanced* democracy, finally moving towards *socialist* democracy; that ultimately they will have to institute the *rule of the working class* in alliance with all toilers and, through it, establish and build up a *socialist system.*

All this the masses will learn; but only in the course of united daily struggle for their immediate partial demands along the lines of policy of the anti-imperialist people's front; they will learn, but only in the course of this sort of daily struggle, headed by the working class, a struggle which will have to be continually lighted up and its meaning deepened *by the projection of the transitional perspective and transitional demands* that will initiate a more advanced democracy of the workers and farmers and will realize the curbing of the monopolies and the first elementary measures of social security; and, on the basis of the continued sharpening of the general crisis of the capitalist system, and with the strengthening of the working class and its allies, this transitional perspective will realize in fact the revolutionary passing over to working class rule and to the socialist transformation of society.

In this great historic process, the revolutionary vanguard of the American working class, the Communist Party, will play an increasingly important part. And its effectiveness as a vanguard party will depend in large measure upon its ability to expose and combat Social-Democratism in all its forms and varieties.

One variety of Social-Democratism is being born at this very moment. We refer to that little circle of literary intellectuals who are now engaging in a certain kind of "revaluation of values." They are revamping, revising, reconsidering and rejecting — nothing less nor more than—the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism even though

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they have always been fighting it and distorting it, and really never understood what it was all about. From this standpoint, one is moved to dismiss the whole thing without further ado.

Yet there is something in this business which requires a little closer attention. First, it is the effort of these elements to represent themselves as pioneers and searchers of a true American radicalism which would be as good and fundamental as Marxism-Leninism "but" free of its "dogmatism," "lack of experimental spirit," "totalitarianism," "blind enthusiasm for the Soviet Union" and, of course, free from connections with the revolutionary movements of other countries and with the Communist International.

A very modest undertaking, as the reader can see; and one which has so far produced nothing more impressive than the stalest aggregation of Social-Democratic, Lovestoneite and Trotskyite "ideas." Only these are presented in an "American" form to catch the unwary and demoralize the inexperienced. And here lies a danger.

Secondly, the "positive" economic and political plans of these revisers of Marxism bear a certain *superficial* resemblance to the honest search of wide circles for some sort of democratic transition to a better life and system. But there is nothing in common between the two. Whereas the mass of the American people are moving ideologically, in various degrees, from capitalism to socialism, from bourgeois-democratic illusions to Marxism-Leninism, these revisers of Marxism are moving, also in various degrees, from general petty-bourgeois radicalism to Social-Democratism, to the camp of imperialism.

There can be no doubt that these revisers and revampers of Marxism into a "true" American radicalism are in the first place *victims* of the great demoralization that prevails in these circles due to the rapid turn in world affairs resulting from the war and its consequences. This demoralization stems in part also from the petty-bourgeois nature of these elements and their relative isolation from the progressive mass movements of the people. It is also certain that these revisionist efforts are objectively a preparation of "ideological" grounds for a more complete *surrender* by these elements to the imperialist bourgeoisie, especially in the anticipation that the United States may become a belligerent and that the class struggle will become sharper.

Communists will continue even more energetically than before to collaborate with all *honest and healthy* efforts to evaluate the experiences of the masses in their struggle for a better life. Communists will bring to bear the clarifying and organizing power of the Marxist-Leninist theory as their contribution to the profound ideological stirrings among the masses, and among labor in the first instance, which are looking for a way out of capitalist hell, war, poverty and oppression. Communists will make sure that their contribution to the ideological search of the masses for a way out is brought forward in the spirit of Stalin, in the spirit of *creative* Marxism, *exposing and combating all varieties of Social-*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Democratism whatever their cover and "form."

This is what we are learning from the experiences of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. We are learning that:

"The Marxist-Leninist theory is the science of the development of society, the science of the working class movement, the science of the proletarian revolution, the science of the building of the Communist society. And as a science it does not and cannot stand still, but develops and perfects itself. Clearly, in its development it is bound to become enriched by new experience and new knowledge, and some of its propositions and conclusions are bound to change in the course of time, are bound to be replaced by new conclusions and propositions corresponding to the new historical conditions." (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (B.)*, p. 355. International Publishers, New York.)

The world-historic contributions of Lenin and Stalin to Marxism demonstrate most brilliantly the creativeness of this science, its continued development and perfection "by new experiences and new knowledge." And this requires a *mastery* of the Marxist-Leninist theory, a mastery which means:

". . . assimilating the *substance* of this theory and learning to use it in the solution of the practical problems of the revolutionary movement under the varying conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat." ***(Ibid.)***

With a growing mastery of this theory, we shall help the working class and its progressive movements to hammer out the best solution for those practical problems which arise from the present major struggle against imperialism, war, unemployment, insecurity and capitalist reaction. We shall promote most effectively the building of the people's anti-imperialist peace front under working class leadership, the orientation towards a peace party of the people.

The February meeting of the National Committee of the Communist Party has formulated the immediate practical tasks. Among them is the preparation for the National Nominating Convention to be held in New York City from May 30 to June 2. This convention "will mark a high point in the preparation of the working class and its Communist vanguard to deal with the vital problems involved in the crucial 1940 Presidential and Congressional elections." *(Convention Call of National Campaign Committee.)* To carry through the preparations for this convention in all its ramifications, and to do so on the basis of the unfolding struggles of the masses against the imperialist and war-making offensive of the bourgeoisie, is the central task of Communist Party organizations at the present time.

A. B.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RESOLUTION ON THE "DAILY WORKER"

ADOPTED BY THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, U. S. A., IN PLENARY SESSION, FEBRUARY 17-18, 1940

IN THIS moment of war crisis, when the capitalist press by its open distortion of news, its deliberate misinterpretation of events, its incitement to war hysteria and violations of the civil liberties, has unmasked itself as a weapon of war and hunger, the *Daily Worker* has proved to be indispensable for informing, educating and organizing the people for peace and civil liberties.

The forces of finance capital, determined at all costs to get our country into war, have become alarmed by the fact that the *Daily Worker,* despite its incomparable weakness of resources and circulation, has become a powerful obstacle to the debauching of the people with the war propaganda of the Anglo-French and Wall Street camarilla.

Following the provocative incitements of the monopoly press, the Government itself—in violation of the Bill of Rights—is now attempting to destroy the *Daily Worker* after sixteen years of existence. In the interest of its war plan, the Roosevelt Administration wishes to override the constitutional provision that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging . . . the freedom of the press," in order to silence any exposure of the reactionary, imperialist, un-American character of the war it wishes to enter.

Under flimsy pretexts, the Roosevelt Administration is seeking to suppress the *Daily Worker.* A chief aspirant for the Republican nomination for President, Thomas E. Dewey, has joined in this attempted assault by instituting criminal libel proceedings against the editor of the paper, Clarence A. Hathaway.

The National Committee of the Communist Party calls urgently upon the workers, the farmers and all believers in democracy and American traditions to join us in an active fight against the looting of the Bill of Rights and destruction of freedom of the press, as represented by the persecution of the *Daily Worker.*

To the members of the Communist Party, the National Committee declares: The touchstone of Party organizational leadership for mass work and education is the mass

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

promotion and building of the *Daily Worker*. The attempted suppression of the *Daily Worker* must be met by the widest popularization and promotion of the paper. In the words of Earl Browder: "For the Communist Party to breathe and live, the defense and building of the *Daily Worker* in this crucial period is more urgent than ever."

The attack on the *Daily Worker* must be met, not only by vigorous support of its defense in courts of law, but by creating a mass circulation for the heroic *Daily Worker* —the best fighter against the plan to plunge our America into this criminal imperialist war.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WAR AIMS OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

THE present imperialist war is a high stage in the rapidly developing general crisis of the world capitalist system caused by the sharpening inherent contradictions of capitalism. This general crisis is due to the growing gulf between the producing power and the purchasing ability of the masses; the increasing struggles among the capitalist countries for markets, raw materials and strategic positions; the intensifying class struggle in all countries; and the growing antagonism between the colonial peoples and the imperialist countries. But its historic setting is the epoch of imperialism, the last stage of capitalism. All of the conflicts of the time have their root in the basic flaw of capitalism: the contradiction between the private ownership of the means of production and the socialized method of their operation. But the present war crisis, unlike that of 1914-18, comes into a capitalist world system that has already been sundered by a successful proletarian revolution, and a huge socialist state towers above, casting the shadow of its success across the failure of its neighbors, employing its greater military strength for a policy of peace that is more dangerous than immediate war to its imperialist neighbors' ambitions.

Although the current war has basically the same imperialist character that the World War had, it is affected by the major difference that the economic and political structure of capitalism is now much weaker in relation to the forces making toward socialist revolution than was the case in 1914. The past twenty-five years have greatly aggravated the general crisis of capitalism which set in with the outbreak of the World War; and this aggravation operates profoundly to shape the character of the present war, its political aims as well as its military strategy.

A generation ago world capitalism was already well into its period of decay, which is the period of monopoly-capital dominance of imperialism, although its economy was on the upgrade in a number of countries. At the beginning of this war, however, capitalism is sick and decrepit and displays all the symptoms of collapse throughout, even though with increasing unevenness. The various capitalist countries have been experiencing a more or less chronic economic crisis for ten years and with difficulty have been keeping their industry and agriculture limping along, with such government sustenance as loans, subsidies, housing proj-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ects, armaments programs, and the like—pulmotor treatments that were virtually unknown and unnecessary in 1914. The effect of this weakened economic situation was to deepen enormously all the capitalist contradictions far more than they were in 1914. At the outbreak of the present war political pressure was being generated on an unprecedented scale in various directions, evidenced by intensified exploitation of the workers and farmers through fascism and other forms of reactionary government; a greater repression of the colonial peoples; an increasingly rapid swallowing of the weaker nations by the big capitalist empires; and a sharpening of the imperialist struggles among the capitalist powers for the redivision of the world. Hence, all the problems of capitalism are today vastly more urgent, profound and insoluble than they were twenty-five years ago.

The anti-capitalist forces are very much stronger now than they were at the opening of the World War. The question of socialism is far more burning and actual. In 1914 the Second International, with its mass parties and their supporting trade unions and cooperatives, presented a strong semblance of a powerful force against imperialism. But in fact it had been corroded for years by opportunism, and with the outbreak of the war it collapsed through the treachery of its leaders.

Only the Russian Bolsheviks followed a revolutionary Marxist policy which enabled them to put an end to capitalism in their country.

At the outset of this present war, however, the forces of socialism are obviously much more mature. First, there now exists the great socialist fortress, the Soviet Union, able to withstand any combination of capitalist powers, and a fundamental factor for progress in world politics. Then, there is the growing anti-imperialist revolt throughout the colonial world, marked chiefly by the Chinese war of liberation, the upheaval in India, and the strong national liberation movement in Latin America. Finally, the workers in all the capitalist countries, under pressure of the deepening crisis, are rapidly developing anti-capitalist moods and ideas which at present manifest themselves in an almost universal mass anti-war sentiment and a growing loss of faith in capitalism. In the event of a prolonged war, this sentiment can, under the leadership of the Communist International, develop into powerful struggles against the capitalist system and for socialism.

The present-day greater strength of the revolutionary forces, combined with the greater weakness of capitalism, strikes the heart of the world bourgeoisie with a consuming fear of proletarian revolution. Fear for the very existence of capitalism is the master key to the policies of all the capitalist countries, including the United States, with regard to the present war. When the World War began in 1914, fear of revolution played only a minor part in the calculations of the war-makers. The two groups of warring imperialist powers, knowing well the lick-spittle character of the Social-Democracy, which dominated the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

working class of Europe, had little fear of its leading a revolutionary upheaval. It was only towards the end of the war that the fear of revolution became real to the bourgeoisie—with the exhaustion of the capitalist countries and with the Bolshevik Revolution inspiring the war-weary masses to smash the empires of the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs, and to threaten European capitalism.

Thus, because of the debilitated condition of capitalism, the great strength of the socialist forces, and the anti-imperialist role of the powerful Soviet Union, the present war at its very beginning assumes the character, not only of an inter-imperialist conflict but, unlike the World War, of a struggle of world imperialism against the forces of revolution. And the tendency is for the imperialists to make the latter phase their dominant aim in the war. Realizing clearly the grave danger to which their whole system is exposed in this war, the capitalists seek to solve their desperate problems at the expense of the masses and by extinguishing the revolutionary forces by violence. This they are trying to accomplish by clamping down restrictions upon the workers, especially on the Communists, in all capitalist countries; by repressing with an iron fist the insistent demands of the colonial peoples; and, above all, by attempting to transform the imperialist war into a general counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union.

American War Aims Analyzed

The policy of American finance capital towards the present war is shaped by the pressure of the deepening general crisis of capitalism, even as is that of all other imperialist countries. It is a policy that bears the same two basic features characteristic of the present-day policy of every imperialist power. That is to say, the United States Government is carrying on, under its own special conditions, a two-phased struggle; first, against rival capitalist states, in order to further its own imperialist interests and to solve its own stubborn economic crisis; and, second, against the international revolutionary forces, in order to save the world capitalist system from revolution, with this second phase tending to become the decisive element in American policy.

The Roosevelt Administration is putting into effect this war policy of Big Business. In doing so it is receiving, in all major essentials, the support of the Republican leaders, as well as that of the dominant forces in Wall Street. The war policy may be stated in these four main aspects:

(a) *The Grab for War Profits:* American finance capital is determined to reap all possible profits from the munitions trade and wartime profiteering generally. Smacking their lips in recollection of the many billions gained in blood money from the sale of munitions during the World War, the capitalists are set to repeat the process in the present war. The Roosevelt Administration, abandoning its New Deal program of pump-priming and its social reform legislation, has agreed in this course with the great capitalists and is now orienting it-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

self to achieving industrial prosperity through war orders. This basic shift in economic policy explains Roosevelt's billion dollar budgetary slash of W.P.A. and Federal social services in the face of 10,000,000 unemployed. Further reductions will be made if sufficient war orders materialize.

As our experience in World War days made quite clear, the hunt for war profits is a basic war policy. It leads directly to the making of war loans to the belligerents, to spreading and lengthening the war, and eventually to actual American participation in the conflict. These tendencies are now definitely evident in Roosevelt's foreign policies. Lifting the arms embargo was the first long step towards war engineered by the war-order profiteers. As yet these exploiters have only had a taste of war-order blood money. They are famished for more and, under the pressure of the critical conditions of American industry, they will redouble their efforts to drum up more orders. They will try to sweep aside the Johnson Act and the cash-and-carry provisions of the Neutrality Act, obstacles to extending hugely profitable war loans to the belligerent powers. They will also endeavor, when they deem the time ripe, to take us militarily into the war in order to build up their bloody munitions' profits.

(b) *Militant Imperialist Expansion:* The second basic element in the war-policy of American finance capital, duly executed by Roosevelt and the Republicans, is the redoubled effort to strengthen its imperialist position in various parts of the world while its great rivals, England, Germany and Japan, are enmeshed in the war. Here again, its internal economic crisis drives it on to make the most strenuous efforts. Seizing upon this favorable situation, American imperialism undoubtedly aims to establish itself as the dominant world power. This determination is manifested in its increased aggressiveness in Latin America, which has resulted in doubling American exports to those countries during the past six months. It has sharpened its policies in the Far East. It is openly and increasingly interfering in European affairs. Roosevelt's unparalleled peace-time military budget is designed to put teeth into this militant imperialism. Already the greater aggressiveness of American imperialism has aroused deep antagonism in Germany, has greatly increased Anglo-American contradictions, has brought Japanese-American relations to a crisis, and has created widespread opposition in Latin America.

(c) *Pro-Ally Support:* The third fundamental of the war policy being advanced by Roosevelt is the extension of active moral and material support to Great Britain and France, the principal war aggressors, in their war against Germany. Roosevelt has avowed his intention of giving the Allied powers all assistance "short of war." Lifting the arms embargo, an unneutral act against Germany, definitely brought this country into the economic phase of the war. Vital support to the Allies is also obligingly extended by our Government through its financial backing of the pound and the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

franc, its virtual acceptance of the outrageous British blockade, and its cooperation with Great Britain and France in their attempt to build an anti-Soviet, anti-German front in Scandinavia. Furthermore, there can be little doubt that Roosevelt has already decided to bring this country militarily into the war should the Allies appear to be in serious danger of losing.

American imperialism, of course, wants to block the emergence of a powerful, victorious super-militant Germany; it also wants to share directly in the spoils of war. But the main reason for its assistance to Great Britain, in spite of the sharpening rivalry between American and British imperialism on many fronts, originates in the fear of American capitalists that German victory would shatter the British Empire and thereby dangerously shake the foundations of world capitalism. The British Empire is not without difficulties as it is: India is surging in revolt and is demanding independence, Ireland has declared itself neutral in the war and is pressing its claim for national unity, South Africa has a one-third anti-war minority in its parliament, the people in Canada have not shown the expected enthusiasm for the war, Palestine is in turmoil, the Moslem countries under British rule are restless, Australia's labor movement has voted 80 per cent for peace, and the working masses in England are most distinctly in favor of peace.

The Soviet-Finnish peace treaty has sharpened all these contradictions within the British Empire. A decisive victory by German imperialism could upset the whole dizzy structure and would also bring down with it the satellite imperialisms of France, Belgium, Holland and Portugal. Such a cataclysm would have far-reaching revolutionary consequences for the world capitalist system. American imperialism —the greatest stronghold of world capitalism — fears this disaster deeply and, despite its own desires to weaken and dominate the British Empire, will try by all means to prevent its collapse, even at the price of this country's entry into the war on the side of the Allies. This pro-Ally phase of Roosevelt's policy is, like the phases cited above, a wide road to war.

(d) *The Anti-Soviet Orientation:* The fourth basic aspect of Roosevelt's (big capital's) war policy is this country's warlike attitude toward the Soviet Union. This is the heart of capitalist class unity in the U. S. which they call "national unity." Ever since the war between the Allies and Germany began the United States Government has systematically picked quarrels with the U.S.S.R. This bellicose attitude is exemplified in the Finnish situation by Roosevelt's diplomatic intervention against the U.S.S.R.; by his war loans to Finland, Norway, and Sweden; by his thinly disguised call for volunteers to fight against the Red Army in Finland; by his placing a moral embargo upon exports to the U.S.S.R.; and by the present unprecedented press and radio campaign of anti-Soviet slander and provocation. Roosevelt's anti-Soviet orientation is further manifested in his current attempt to force Japan, not only to share its loot in China

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with American imperialism, but to adopt a position of active hostility against the U.S.S.R.

Roosevelt's anti-Soviet orientation comes to a crux in his growing leadership in the world efforts of the imperialists to transform the present war into a general capitalist war against the Soviet Union. What Chamberlain, Daladier and the great capitalists behind them want is to force Hitler, or some puppet successor, to turn Germany's guns against the U.S.S.R. Through a general anti-Soviet war these imperialists hope, not only to satisfy their greedy appetites by carving up the vast and rich territories of the Soviet Union, but to put an end, once and for all, to the menace of socialism by destroying its great fortress, the U.S.S.R. Roosevelt's anti-Soviet orientation is quite in line with this infamous counter-revolutionary plot of Great Britain and France. Needless to add, this policy is packed with war danger for the United States.

In the foregoing analysis we have pointed out briefly the four major aspects of American imperialist war policy. Through them all runs the connecting strand of American imperialism's determination to achieve world domination. Each of the policies described is a road to war, and, if not checkmated by mass opposition, will eventually involve the United States in the military conflict.

These four major points are the key to the American Government's role in any "peace" movement that might be carried through by the imperialists at the present time. The things the American bourgeois "peace-makers" would have in mind are: to profiteer in one form or another at the expense of the war-torn countries; to further Wall Street's ambitions to establish United States' hegemony over the capitalist world; to preserve world capitalism by preventing the sudden smash-up of the British Empire at the hands of Germany, and to isolate the Soviet Union by lining up the capitalist powers against her.

The Technique of Dragging the United States Into the War

The warmongers not only have a war program, but also a well-developed technique for involving this country in the war. This is necessary because the overwhelming majority of the American people are opposed, and increasingly so, to participation in the war, a fact which has been repeatedly demonstrated by Gallup polls and many other expressions of public opinion. The imperialists are, therefore, trying systematically to confuse and break up this mass opposition to the war. Their pro-war technique is a combination of demagogy and compulsion, and it is being applied cooperatively by the Roosevelt Administration, the Republican Party, the great bulk of the capitalist press, the reactionary radio commentators, conservative labor leaders, and other spokesmen of American imperialism. The methods they are employing have much in common with the means used to involve the unwilling American people in the World War. Their essentials may be briefly analyzed as follows:

(a) *Sowing Democratic War Illu-*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sions. One of the major ideological weapons now being employed by the warmongers is the widespread and persistent propaganda that Great Britain and France as "democratic" countries are fighting to defend freedom and civilization, and that therefore the United States must support them. This argumentation is based on a gross lie, of course. Great Britain and France are waging their reactionary war for imperialist aims. The last thing the Chamberlains and Daladiers are worried about is the preservation of democracy. Chamberlain's "War Against Hitlerism" slogan has the main purpose of bringing Hitlerism into the service of British imperialism. The American people still vividly recollect and resent deeply the way they were tricked into the World War by Wilson's lying slogans, "Make the world safe for democracy" and "The war to end war." Nevertheless, the people are by no means immune to the similar illusions widely cultivated at the present time, which lead straight towards American participation in the war.

Moreover, the warmongers, in collaboration with spokesmen of British imperialism, seek to reinforce these illusions with propaganda of a "new order of society" via a "United States of Europe" and similar schemes to be established, they say, at the close of the war. In this they are especially aided by the Social-Democratic leaders. All this demagogy, malodorously reminiscent of President Wilson's empty 14 points and his futile League of Nations, is designed to sugar-coat the war for the people. In truth, if the imperialists are allowed by the masses to dictate the eventual peace, it will be far more predatory than either Versailles or Brest-Litovsk. But if the warmongers can make the people believe in such bright promises of a new world after the war, it will be all the easier for them to weaken popular resistance to the war.

(b) *Neutrality Demagogy.* Knowing full well that the masses in this country are almost unanimously determined to stay out of the war, the imperialist warmongers cover up their pro-war maneuvers with a thick cloak of protestations that they desire to maintain American neutrality. Even their most brazen pro-war activities are carried on in the name of keeping America out of war. Thus, it was with shouts of the need to preserve American neutrality that Congress revoked the arms embargo. And the almost open war measures against the U.S.S.R. in the Finnish situation were also cynically taken under the mask of neutrality. This neutrality demagogy brings back to the American people the stench of the World War —especially since the Lansing papers have revealed recently that although President Wilson was elected in 1916 on the slogan, "He kept us out of war," both he and Lansing had long before resolved that the United States must enter the war and were definitely maneuvering to that end. Despite these clear lessons from the past, however, the present-day neutrality demagogy is a highly dangerous weapon of the warmongers.

(c) *The "Inevitability" of War.* To sap the anti-war sentiments of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the American masses, the warmongers strive to develop a fatalistic attitude that if the war lasts long enough the United States cannot avoid being drawn into it. The aim of this insidious war fatalism, enunciated as a sort of unchallengeable gospel truth, is to undermine mass resistance to the specific steps in the imperialists' war program. Some warmongers are even beginning to talk in terms of "eventually, why not now?" The Social-Democrats, most brazen of warmongers, are openly clamoring for war, especially against the U.S.S.R.

(d) *Peace Trickery.* Nor do American imperialists spare any effort to exploit the overwhelming desire of the masses for peace. Just as the warmongers are loud-mouthed advocates of American "neutrality," so, too, are they ardent champions of world "peace." Myron C. Taylor and Sumner Welles went abroad ostentatiously carrying banners of peace, but in reality they are agents of American imperialism, and their job is to advance its war policies. The American people vividly recall the "peace" activities of Colonel House and other imperialists that did so much to involve us in the World War. Nevertheless, the present "peace" maneuverings of the American Government are highly insidious and full of danger for the masses in this country.

(e) *National Unity.* One of the most sinister maneuvers of the warmongers is being carried out under the slogan of national unity, issued not long ago by President Roosevelt. The reality behind this so-called national unity is that the big capitalists and their henchmen, having achieved unity in their war program, are now seeking, with specious pleas of the need to unite the people for peace, to break the war opposition of the masses with the help of the accommodating conservative leaders of the trade unions and other mass organizations. The purpose is to secure the subservience of the toiling masses to the war program of the unified bourgeoisie. The national unity device was used effectively far and wide under various names and forms in all capitalist countries during World War times. Naturally, the imperialists, in their present need, are not overlooking such a potent weapon.

In top capitalist circles this "national unity" for the war aims of finance capital has already been more fully achieved than readily meets the eye. While the American bourgeoisie is sharply divided on many issues of foreign policy, it has found a new unity in the struggle against the socialist revolution, and on the agreement to exclude the masses from participation in settling these issues. It is most significant that the great capitalist press and the Republican Party leaders voice very little criticism of Roosevelt's foreign policies, except in the matter of reciprocal trade agreements. Their attacks upon Roosevelt are mainly on domestic questions of secondary importance: on the third term issue, on how fast and far the New Deal reform measures and pump-priming can be liquidated, etc. The fight between the two bourgeois parties represents rival capitalist groups and political bureaucracies fighting for control, within the common framework of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the imperialist war policy. The Republican Party and Democratic Party leaders, agreed on the essentials of finance capital's war program, are trying to confront the American people in the coming election with a situation where, under a cloud of peace demagogy by both parties, a vote for either party will amount to a vote for war, in that it will prevent a clear expression of the people's desire for peace.

In their attempts to corral organized labor into the treacherous "national unity," the capitalists have by no means repeated the success they had with the help of the Gompers clique during the World War. This is because the workers today are much more advanced politically. Green and other A. F. of L. leaders, many railroad union bureaucrats, and the Hillman group in the C.I.O. are eager enough to promote the pro-war "national unity"; but the great body of trade union leadership and members, especially of the C.I.O., have not accepted it. Roosevelt hopes to overwhelm labor's opposition by forcing the C.I.O. to capitulate to the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. Altogether, the "national unity" scheme is a very dangerous trap for the workers and other peace forces.

(f) *National Emergency.* Roosevelt has put teeth into his "national unity" slogan by the proclamation of a "limited national emergency." Its meaning is this: Those who do not accept the prospect of being robbed by war profiteers, of having their civil rights curtailed, or of dying on European battlefields to save world capitalism and to advance American imperialist interests—those who are not deceived by the tricky slogans designed to lure them into supporting the war program of Big Business—are to be compelled to submit to the program by dint of "emergency" repression policies. Preparation for war—that is the significance of the present persecution of the Communist Party and the arrest of Earl Browder and many others of its leaders; the attacks upon the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions under the anti-trust laws; the widespread infringement of civil liberties; the attempts to destroy the Wagner Act, the Wages-and-Hours Act, and other beneficial New Deal legislation; the expansion of the F.B.I. into a budding Gestapo, the granting of a new lease of life to the red-baiting Dies Committee; the formation of the infamous M-Plan of industrial mobilization; and many similar reactionary measures. This sinister repression of popular liberties under the pretext of a national emergency is basically akin to the persecution techniques used during World War times in many countries, including the United States, to break down mass opposition to the war.

The Fight for Peace

To summarize: American imperialism is endeavoring to plunge this country into the maelstrom of war for the same basic reasons as those of British, German and French imperialism—namely, to further its own imperialist interests and to beat down the rising forces of proletarian revolution. To advance these reactionary aims American imperialism has developed a definite war program, the four main

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

essentials of which are its race for munitions profits, its policies of militant imperialist expansion, its pro-Ally help in the war, and its anti-Soviet orientation. To get the American people to support this war program, American imperialism, with all its tremendous means of influencing public opinion, through the Roosevelt Government, supported by former New Dealers, Republicans, "Socialists," Lovestoneites, Trotskyites (each in his own way), is putting forth an elaborate pro-war technique of deceit and force.

As we have seen, this insidious warmongering is very dangerous. In the main, however, despite the unparalleled barrage of lying propaganda to which they have been subjected, the American people are manifestly increasing resistance to the machinations of the warmongers. Among other evidence is the big struggle against the lifting of the arms embargo, a fight by the masses which forced the incorporation of the embarrassing cash-and-carry provisions into the Neutrality Act; the lack of mass response to the Finnish relief collections and the defeat of the imperialists' plan of making the Finnish loan an outright war loan; the forced release of the Detroit prisoners by the Department of Justice; the peace stand of the youth movement; the widespread opposition to Roosevelt's hunger-and-war budget, labor's changed attitude on the question of a third term for Roosevelt; and the workers' present great militancy in strikes, wage and hour movements, organizing campaigns, and other struggles.

Moreover, the anti-war spirit of the masses is becoming constantly more clear-sighted and better organized. Today, instead of such spontaneous, naive movements as that which in the recent past confusedly supported the Ludlow Amendment, we now have such well-organized movements as the "Yanks Are Not Coming" committees in the trade unions, the adoption of strong anti-war positions by the United Mine Workers, the American Youth Congress, and similar actions by many other progressive national and local mass organizations. In the lower ranks of both the Democratic and Republican Parties, too, genuine anti-war elements are beginning to make their voices heard. The growing determination of the masses to keep out of the imperialist war was clearly demonstrated by the recent Gallup poll, which indicated that there is now only about half as much sentiment as there was six months ago in favor of our going into the war on the side of the Allies in case the latter are in danger of defeat.

By a clear-headed and determined mass struggle the United States can be kept out of the war. This fact must be kept always in mind. The overwhelming majority of the American people are firmly opposed to this country joining the slaughter and if this vast mass of popular sentiment is given efficient leadership it can successfully defeat the plans of the warmongers to involve us in the war. But there are great difficulties in the way of such a victory by the peace forces. Among the masses there is not full clarity as to the imperialist character of the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

war and there are also dangerous illusions engendered by the peace guise of Roosevelt's policies. Then there is the insidious campaign of demagogic propaganda being put forth by the innumerable mouthpieces of capitalism, skillfully designed to disguise and make palatable the war moves of American imperialism. There are, too, the slick maneuvers of the reactionary trade union bureaucrats, willing servants of the war-makers. Finally, there are the repressive measures of the Government, and the constant danger of "incidents" deliberately staged to drive the country into the war.

A successful fight to keep America out of the war requires a thoroughgoing and continuous exposure of the imperialist character of the war. Especially, too, must the peace policy of the Soviet Union be made clear to the people. At the same time, every individual policy of the war-makers and each step by which these reactionary elements are seeking to draw the United States deeper into the war must be fought, both ideologically and organizationally. Most important, the fight for peace, to be effective, must be based upon the struggle for the immediate economic and political demands of the masses. The more the masses fight for better wages, shorter hours, work relief, against high prices, the more they will come into conflict with big capital's war program as a whole.

To help the people understand the methods now being used to force them into the war, special efforts must be made to popularize the pertinent lessons of the World War—the role then played by war orders and war loans; the tricks used by the Government, employers and labor leaders to hogtie labor; the lying neutrality and peace slogans; the glittering promises of post-war utopias made by the war-makers; the organized persecution of anti-war elements by the Government, and all the other methods of hypocrisy and compulsion employed to involve the United States in the World War. Especially must there be no surrender to the fatalistic theory that this country will inevitably be forced to enter the war if it is a long one. The masses must be taught that, on the contrary, the United States can be kept out of the war if a real fight is made toward this end. In all this educational and organizational work the Communist Party carries a heavy responsibility.

American workers and other toilers have everything to lose and nothing to gain by our participation in the present imperialist war. For us to join in the war would mean, not to defend democracy, but to advance the sordid interests of American imperialism in its bid for more profits, world hegemony, and the salvation of the capitalist system. It would result in the butchery of millions of young men; the waste of immeasurable wealth; the sacrifice of precious liberties; and devastating post-war economic crises, with the pauperization of new millions. It would more tightly fasten the clutches of the capitalist parasites upon the United States. Every true national interest of the American people demands that this country keep out of the war.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

From a world standpoint it is no less necessary that the United States should keep out of the war. The United States Government, representing as it now does the united will of finance capital, could be, as a belligerent, only a force of reaction. In the World War the United States Government, under cover of democratic hypocrisies, acted in full partnership with the capitalist vultures who formulated the infamous Versailles Treaty. It also did its bit with England, France, Japan, and other capitalist countries, in trying, during 1918-20, to overthrow by military force the newly-born Soviet Republic. This time, because world capitalism is in deeper crisis than in 1914-18, and because the American bourgeoisie has united around the program of its most reactionary wing, the role of the United States Government in the war must necessarily be even more reactionary. Finance capital dreams of making our country a sort of world gendarme of capitalism, seeking to beat down the resurgent progressive and revolutionary forces everywhere, in the colonies and in the belligerent capitalist countries, and to compel their further submission to the imperialist rulers of the decadent capitalist system. The counter-revolutionary role to which finance capital would subject America in this war is significantly forecast by Roosevelt's present violent attacks against the Soviet Union.

If the United States is to play a constructive democratic peace role internationally, it is necessary to break the hold of finance capital upon the American Government. To achieve this, the masses of workers, farmers and other toilers must organize themselves into a great people's peace front, into a broad farmer-labor party, and thus bring into active play their potentially overwhelming power. The general aims of such a party would be to struggle militantly against the war program of Big Business and eventually to take over the political leadership of this country. The coming national elections will offer the means to make real progress towards this goal of a great peace party. At the same time the elections will provide the Communist Party, campaigning with its own Presidential candidates, with an opportunity to clarify the minds of the masses regarding the war, to organize them in defense of their immediate economic and political interests, and to educate them in the principles of socialism.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEGRO PEOPLE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

BY THEODORE R. BASSETT and A. W. BERRY

The Negro's Case in 1940

THOMAS JEFFERSON declared: "Nature has given to our black brethren talents equal to those of other men . . . the appearance of the want of them is due only to their degraded condition of existence both in Africa and America." Jefferson further stated in regard to the Negro slaves that he desired "ardently to see a good system commenced for raising the condition of their mind and body to what it ought to be."

This democratic, Jeffersonian ideal was later implemented by the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution. But 1940 finds the Negroes bound by an intricate network of social, political and economic restrictions inherited from the slavery period. The slavocracy, never fully destroyed, rises up in its material and ideological forms to hound, persecute, and deride the Negro people throughout the United States.

Under the Whip of Lynch Law, Segregation, Discrimination

The rope and faggot, extra-legal violence, are the main weapon of suppression and intimidation to which the American bourgeoisie resorts against the nationally oppressed Negroes. Mob law and racial incitement are now important weapons in the drive toward war. During 1939, "only" five avowed lynchings took place, while an investigator of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People estimated that in one state alone, in Mississippi, there were twenty victims of lynchings through the new, "silent," lynch technique. The Department of Justice winks while the Ku Klux Klan in Florida and South Carolina intimidates and flogs Negroes who dare attempt to exercise their rights under the Constitution. Admittedly, the identity of forty persons in the mob at Snow Hill, Maryland, which attempted, in February, to lynch a Negro mother and her daughter, are known. Yet no local or Federal action against these blood-thirsty Kluxers is even contemplated.

W.P.A. discrimination against Negroes in discharging, rehiring, and forcing them to take secondary classification and unskilled jobs, has been notorious. Discrimination in relief has also been flagrant. The dire effects of this discrimination, now that the Roosevelt Administration has joined the reac-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tionary pack and has launched a program of cutting W.P.A. to the bone, can be easily imagined from the available general figures.

W.P.A. Administrator Harrington admits that 87 per cent of the 775,000 W.P.A. workers, discharged as a result of the offensive of the reactionary coalition in the first session of the 76th Congress, have not found jobs in private industry. Of these 87 per cent, only 27 per cent were rehired on W.P.A.; 28 per cent were able to get on relief, while the remaining 32 per cent were left to join the twelve million who exercise the right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" on the basis of "rugged individualism" via the garbage can in the Ohio manner.

The Negro masses are the greatest sufferers from the prodigious unemployment that is constantly with us, the recovery flurry notwithstanding.

In Columbus, Ohio, an average industrial center, general employment increased for September over August; yet Negro employment lagged. Add to this the provisions of the New York State Welfare law —other states are following suit— providing for "deportation" to place of origin for relief applicants who cannot establish settlement, and you are reminded of the fugitive slave laws and their operation in the last century.

Nor does the condition of those employed call for hallelujahs. Thanks to the discriminatory policy of the big, war-profiteering employers, and thanks to the servile support of this policy by the Green-Woll-Hutcheson clique of the A. F. of L., the Negro at best clings desperately to the lowest rung of the economic ladder. Need we be surprised, therefore, by the recent governmental survey which revealed that 41 per cent of the Negro famlies in the United States live on an income of less than $300 a year?

Five million Negroes in the Southland eke out a miserable existence in semi-slave, chain-gang conditions, and subject to the sharpest exploitation. Having shared the least in general New Deal benefits, they are today in large numbers becoming workless and landless refugees, relentlessly driven by the deepening cotton crisis from corn and cotton patches to wayside hut and Red Cross rations.

War-mad Wall Street's vassal, King Jim Crow, still reigns in American life. In the South, the Negroes are legally segregated in all public conveyances and barred from all public institutions. Twenty-nine states have statutes prohibiting inter-marriage. The right to vote, constitutionally guaranteed, is denied to Negroes by a combination of downright terror and subterfuges. Eight states have poll tax laws. In the North, too, various forms of segregation and Jim-Crowism exist. There is discrimination, now subtle, now open, in hospitals, schools, amusement centers, etc. Every city has its Negro ghetto, with an invisible iron wall beyond which Negroes dare not attempt to establish residence lest they encounter violence. In some instances Negroes pay from 40 to 50 per cent higher rents than whites. With a sense of feudal right, King Jim

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Crow bars Negroes even from the upper strata of the armed forces of the country. His shadow mocks and beclouds the great sport of baseball.

The American bourgeoisie strives to keep the Negro people degraded and backward as a condition for maintaining their special, national oppression. "White superiority" is the drug used to secure the support of the exploited white masses for the special oppression of the Negro people. Hence the State of Mississippi, to cite one instance, spends $45 for education for each white pupil per year (a sorry enough allotment as it is), but only $5.45 for each Negro pupil! This, apart from the segregation policy in the schools. Even in New York, the most liberal city in the country, discriminatory zoning of Negro high school students exists.

The white death-rate is 10.5 per thousand, the Negro 13.5. Wall Street exacts its super-profits, but the Negroes pay the toll in death.

The true role of the Negro people in the cultural and historical development of the United States is consciously omitted from textbooks. A distorted picture is given. Capitalist newspapers magnify Negro crime, but Negro achievements are given little publicity or none at all. *Gone With the Wind*, a glorification of the slavocracy, a distortion of the progressive historical traditions of the country, a flagrant defamation of the Negro people, is a classic example of contemporary anti-Negro propaganda.

Thus the living remnants of slavocracy confront the Negroes in their daily lives. This "stench of the slave-market" which blows from the brutalizing prison-house of the oppressed nation pollutes the whole air of American democracy. The demands of the Negro masses, the most "ill-fed, ill-housed and ill-clothed" of the nation, cannot be denied without the denial of the fundamental democratic aspirations of all the American people. Hence, the achievement of victories in the fight for equal rights for Negroes—economic, political, and social—constitutes a democratic advance for all the American people. Negro equality would lay the basis for unity of the American people against their enemies at home and abroad.

Roosevelt's "National Unity" and the Negro People

Real *national unity*—the unity of the American people—can be attained only by ridding the country of its feudal vestiges. Does Mr. Roosevelt's "national unity" mean that the Negroes are no longer pariahs and are to be accepted as equals in American life? On the contrary, the President has made friends with the hated Negro-baiters in Congress. He has filled the W.P.A. with anti-Negro army officers, making doubly sure that the Negro people receive the brunt of the burden placed on the masses by his war-and-hunger budget. Smoking the pipe of peace with Garner, Ellender and Bilbo, he is blind to the lynch mob, the degrading social conditions and the thousand and one dangers threatening the life and liberty of the Negroes. Roosevelt, in his budget message, as well as told the starving Negroes

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who looked to the New Deal for bread: "Let them eat battleships!"

"Already the severest sufferers from unemployment, Negroes will suffer immeasurably as a result of the proposed decrease of the relief appropriation," correctly states an *Amsterdam News* news dispatch of January 13, 1940. "It is hard for a majority of citizens to understand why the spending of billions for battleships and other instruments of destruction should take precedence over everything else in the national budget," protests the same newspaper editorially on January 20, 1940, and asks: "Is the Administration speculating on the war creating enough work to go around?"

What the editorial writer witnesses are the first fruits of the war economy (as opposed to social economy), the basis of Roosevelt's policy of "national unity." The capitalist class as a whole is reunited on the issue of dragging the United States into the European conflict. Roosevelt has always carried out a capitalist policy. A representative of the so-called liberal bourgeoisie, he was carrying out a policy designed to solve the problem of the internal market of capitalism by building up the purchasing power of the masses. This necessitated certain social reforms popularly known as the New Deal. In general, the Negroes gained from the progressive measures of the New Deal.

Roosevelt recognized that the foundation of the restricted Southern market lay in the appalling condition of the Negroes. The South, with its glaring poverty of Negroes and whites, was a drag on the nation, its *economic problem Number One*. Hence, his remarks at Gainesville, Georgia, on March 23, 1938:

"The buying power of the people of Georgia and . . . many other states is still so low today that the people of the states cannot purchase the products of industry.

". . . millions . . . *are so underemployed and so underpaid that the burden of their poverty affects the little businessman and the big businessman and the millionaire himself.*" (Our emphasis—*T.R.B. and A.W.B.*)

Motivated by capitalist interests, Roosevelt's "humanitarianism" stopped the supplies which Negro and white progressives—including Communists—sought to send to the Ethiopian people and threatened to prosecute leaders of the Ethiopian defense campaign, but rushed American airplanes and millions of dollars to the capitalists and landlords of Finland.

That is why Roosevelt was (and is) silent on the Anti-Lynching Bill, speaking of it ambiguously when he was forced to speak at all.

Even so the decisive sections of finance capital, which were moving in the direction of fascism, fought his New Deal measures. Roosevelt was compelled to lean on labor and the people for support. Communists supported all the progressive measures of Roosevelt's New Deal.

The Roosevelt of 1938 incurred the hatred and was the object of the foulest slanders at the hands of the Southern lynchocrats Glass, Talmadge, Texas Jack Garner, *et al.* He was castigated by all the little Garnerites (Dies, Starnes) and their Northern Republican and Democratic cronies, the McNarys, Tafts

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and Tydingses. But *this* Roosevelt has "gone with the wind." A new fire-eating Roosevelt is now one with these diehard, Negro-hating, unreconstructed rebels. Roosevelt's differences with the Republicans are factional, while against the workers, the toiling farmers, the city lower middle classes and the Negro people, he conducts the *class* struggle.

The Negro People in the 1940 Elections

To what party then can the Negro people turn as the political vehicle of struggle for their urgent demands? To the Republican Party?

"The program of the Republican Party offers the best opportunity for the improving of the economic conditions of the country as a whole and the masses in particular," says the *New York Age*, Negro Republican weekly (November 18, 1939).

"They are hoping that a new Federal Administration will soon emancipate them. . . . Colored voters, especially in the Northern and Western states . . . have a patriotic part to play in the struggle ahead of us," declares Dr. Emmett J. Scott, a leading Negro Republican spokesman. (*Ibid.*, December 9, 1939.)

But can the Negroes in their struggle for social betterment follow the advice of the gentlemen of the Republican Party? By no means.

First, it is clear that President Roosevelt has adopted in the main the program advocated by the Republican Party, the war-and-hunger program that is already causing such havoc among the Negroes. The Republicans' claim to administrative power is that they are better qualified to carry through the savage drive against the rights and living standards of the people.

Moreover, John D. M. Hamilton, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, in his "Will-you-marry-me?" speech to the Southern bourbons, June 22, 1938, carried further the lily-white Jim-Crow policy of Hoover, in declaring that there "is today no insurmountable barrier between the real Democrats [read: Connally, Glass, Bilbo] of the South and the Republican Party."

This Jim-Crow attitude, revealing the tarnished "soul" of the Republican Party, evidences itself in the underhanded but effective support given the Southern filibusterers of the Anti-Lynching Bill, by refusing to vote for cloture. This support assured the defeat of the Bill in the Senate of the 75th Congress and lingers as a perpetual barrier to its enactment. Already weakened by amendments, the Anti-Lynching Bill, without pressure and vigilance of labor and progressives, faces either defeat or passage as an impotent, toothless, and inane measure. Hence, the Negro people can expect worse than nothing from the Republican Party.

Negroes can be a decisive factor in sixteen Northern and border states with a total of 278 electoral votes. This is what motivates the unmitigated demagogy of Taft and Hamilton Fish with their special approach to Negroes, encouraged by a certain shift of Negro votes from the Democratic to the Republican Party last fall in Philadelphia, Cleveland, New Jersey and Connecticut. This explains, also, the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

subtle demagogy of Mrs. Roosevelt, the political tight-rope exhibition of President Roosevelt on the Anti-Lynching Bill, and the careful tread of "Silent" Garner from the Southwest. But now that the bourgeoisie has united on a reactionary hunger-and-war program, the Negro masses have no reason to support either of the two major parties.

Progressive labor was the backbone in the great democratic upsurge which took place in the country in recent years. As an outgrowth of this upsurge, the Negro masses registered the greatest advance since Reconstruction. The security and well-being of the Negro masses was furthered through the entrance of more than 500,000 Negro workers into the trade unions of both the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. The Negro bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, confined to the market of the Negro ghetto, participated in this advance.

A broad movement in the South for the right to vote and for the abolition of poll tax has taken shape. Similarly the movement for equal educational opportunity has made marked headway. Important organizations of the Negro people, such as the National Negro Congress and the Southern Youth Congress, have arisen. These developments took place on the crest of the labor and democratic upsurge. They could not have taken place without a struggle against the white-chauvinistic policy of the Green, Woll, Frey, Hutcheson clique of the A. F. of L., as well as against their reactionary policies in general —a struggle in which Communists are proud to have prominently participated.

The Negro people must find the road to independent political action in alliance with labor—in an anti-imperialist party of peace. All the special issues which face the Negro people can be brought forward in the political arena by such a party. The basis for a program of such a party is already formulated in the United Mine Workers' Convention resolutions, the C.I.O. legislative program, and in the programs of the National Negro Congress and the American Youth Congress.

The immediate burning issues of the Negro people are the fight for peace; abolition of the poll tax and the right to vote in the South; the fight for jobs, adequate relief, a housing and health program; the passage of a Federal Anti-Lynching Bill with no emasculating amendments; an end to Jim-Crowism; equal educational opportunities and the preservation and unfolding of the Negro's genuine cultural heritage. A few highlights from the statement adopted at the golden anniversary convention of the United Mine Workers, in February, will reveal how closely it parallels the urgent needs of the Negro masses.

The statement calls for action on unemployment as the outstanding problem in American life; extension of the Social Security Act, to cover domestic servants and agricultural workers; abolition of wage differentials through operation of the Wages and Hours Law; an enlarged housing program, and an expanded health program; placing the burden of taxes on the high income brackets; aid to the youth; defense of civil liberties; an end to the anti-Negro Dies Committee, and support

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to the LaFollette Committee; the right of labor to organize and bargain collectively, and the passage of the Federal Anti-Lynching Bill. It condemns the Scottsboro frameup as an attack on the whole Negro people and provides for expulsion of members of the union who belong to the Ku Klux Klan. It warns against the warmongers and urges vigilance to keep the United States out of the European war.

The policies of progressive labor as exemplified in the U.M.W.A. declaration and the C.I.O. legislative program offer, therefore, a practical basis for the unity of the Negro people with the working class and all toiling sections of the population.

The Negro and the Imperialist War

The unified bourgeoisie and their henchmen, in maneuvering to involve this country in the imperialist war, seek to extend their "national unity" into the ranks of the Negro masses.

The so-called liberal bourgeoisie serves as the link between the economic royalists and the Negro masses, as the channel of bourgeois, pro-war influence. Having gone over bag and baggage into the camp of reaction and war preparation, the liberal bourgeoisie is working feverishly to drag in the Negro people. Hence, the gravely aggravated danger of national reformism with its anti-labor policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

Faithful henchmen of the bourgeoisie, as well as confused elements, are raising pro-war slogans among the Negroes.

Dr. Emmett J. Scott, special assistant to the Secretary of War during the Wilson Administration, speaking in St. Louis, on September 22, 1939, the seventy-seventh anniversary of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by Lincoln, discussed the probable entry of the United States into the European conflict. He admitted that "when war does come, it always falls heaviest upon the lower stratum" which "has everything to lose and nothing to gain," that we would be "entering a war which is not of our own making and from which we should emerge battered, torn and disadvantaged beyond repair." Nevertheless, he assured the warmongers that "should war come to America, . . . the Negro stands ready now, as he has ever stood ready, by pledged allegiance, to respond again." Thus Dr. Scott and all the Dr. Scotts seek to utilize the noble part played by the Negroes in the really great progressive wars of the United States—the War of Independence, the War of 1812, and the Civil War—to enlist the Negro's support for American imperialism in this reactionary war.

Britain and France are fighting a war for democracy, contend William Pickens, Sr., of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Wendel Malliet, of the *New York Amsterdam News*. Is not war the continuation of the "peacetime" politics of the given ruling class by other means? Who can deny that the leit-motif of Chamberlain's strategy was to egg Hitler on against the U.S.S.R. and thereby weaken both the imperialist rival and the hated class enemy, the Soviet Union? Who can believe

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

then that the hypocritical Anglo-French imperialists, who helped Hitler to gain power and build his war machine, and who in their "appeasement" game so callously sacrificed Manchuria, Ethiopia, Austria, Spain, Albania, Czechoslovakia, and Poland to the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis, are now waging a war for the freedom and independence of these self-same nations?

Can British imperialism whose genius initiated the custom of civilizing their rebellious colonial slaves by airplane bombings, and whose answer to the just demands of the great Irish and Indian peoples for independence is the bullet and hangman's noose—can this "merrie England" honestly be concerned about the right of self-determination of weak nations?

Can French imperialism, which bears the honor of having "civilized" the natives of French equatorial Africa at the rate of one million graves a year, be concerned about freedom and justice?

Can France wage a war for democracy when she outlaws the Communist Party, the biggest political party of the working class; drags the popularly-elected Communist deputies before military tribunals on trumped-up charges of treason; ruthlessly suppresses all peace forces; and places Spanish and all anti-fascist refugees in concentration camps? Or Britain, who, under the cry of "emergency," is carrying through the most high-handed measures against the living standards and the civil liberties of the people?

Among the Negro masses it is becoming more and more difficult to peddle the theory that the British and French imperialists are waging a war for democracy. Therefore the advocates of the theory of the "lesser evil" start out by admitting that it is an imperialist war, but argue that it is in the interest of Negro liberation that Britain and France shall be the victors. Of course, money is an effective blinder for bribed gentlemen of this camp, but we wish to ask those naively sanguine to take a peep behind the curtain of history.

It is an undeniable fact that the victory, in 1918, of the biggest colonial slaveholders, England and France, brought a heavier yoke and new attacks on the colonial masses. On the other hand, all historical experience, including that of the Negro people in America, the Haitians and the American people as a whole in their independence struggle against Britain, shows that the difficulties of the oppressors are the opportunities of the downtrodden.

There are others, besides the pro-Ally propagandists, who sow confusion among the Negro masses.

"This is a white man's war," argue the extreme nationalists among the Negro people. "Let the whites kill themselves off, and then the Negroes will come into their own." This reactionary theory is designed to demobilize the Negro people in face of the powerful offensive of the warmongers. Nothing would be more helpful to the war-makers than to have the Negroes wait supinely with folded arms chanting, "It's a white man's war." It is not a "white man's war." It is an imperialist war between powerful capitalist states designed, among other things, to draw tighter the chains around the necks of the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

colonial peoples. Hundreds of thousands of Negro soldiers are in France, picked to be sacrificed as cannon fodder for the benefit of the Two Hundred Families. The French imperialists boast about their Negro manpower. Britain has already brought Indian troops to Europe and is preparing to throw Negroes into the fray. To be lulled asleep today by this slogan—"It's a white man's war"—when big issues are being decided which will affect the course of the Negro people for generations would be a costly error.

Confusion in the Negro Press

The pressure of the warmongering bourgeoisie is reflected in the Negro press. Two tendencies characterize the Negro press. On the one hand, there exists a confused and indirect reflection of the deep desire of the Negroes for peace; and on the other, a growing reflection of the bourgeois pro-war influence expressed in echoing the various pro-war and anti-Soviet arguments of the white metropolitan press, with a special Negro angle in editorials and columns. The first tendency finds its greatest expression in the smaller papers; the second in the larger. However, three important Negro newspapers, the *New York Amsterdam News*, the *Pittsburgh Courier* and the *New York Age*, although not clear on all aspects of the issue, protested against the loans to Finland.

Note should be taken of the position of the official organ of the N.A.A.C.P., *Crisis*:

"Fascism in Europe is not confined to Italy and Germany. . . . As *The New York Times* well puts it, . . . 'Hitlerism is brown Communism, Stalinism red fascism' . . . the brutal and bloody Soviet purges and fantastic 'trials' can have no cause for misunderstanding. . . . We must choose between liberty, peace and life, and terror, war and destruction."

This attack on the Soviet Union is from the leading editorial of *Crisis* for October, 1939. Although Mr. Roy Wilkins is the responsible editor, Mr. Walter White, the National Secretary, is a member of the editorial advisory board. The N.A.A.C.P. is an influential organization among the Negroes. In this crucial world situation, it bears great responsibility in safeguarding the interests of the Negro masses. The question arises as to whether this is the official position of the N.A.A.C.P.

We address ourselves to Messrs. Wilkins and White. Is a war against the U.S.S.R. in the interests of the Negro masses? Who, we ask, are those that demand and attempt to organize a worldwide counter-revolutionary attack on the U.S.S.R.? Are they the friends or enemies of Negro liberation?

You must be aware of the well-known and undeniable fact that the U.S.S.R. was the first to break through the world front of imperialism, and thereby delivered an irreparable blow to the imperialist oppressors of the Negro people, and that the stronger the U.S.S.R., the weaker these age-old enemies of the Negroes.

It is common knowledge that the U.S.S.R. has shown the whole world the way to national equality and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

friendship between peoples. As a result of the victory of the working class under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, imperial Russia, the prison house of numerous oppressed nationalities, where national enmity and racial hatred were fostered by tsarism and the Russian bourgeoisie, was transformed into a free commonwealth of nations who have inscribed into the Stalinist Constitution the following living clause carried out to the letter:

"The equality of the rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law." (*Constitution of the U.S.S.R.*, p. 42, International Publishers, New York.)

Is it not an undeniable fact, Messrs. Wilkins and White, that the Anglo-French war regimes, representatives of the biggest colonial slave empires of the world, the greatest hangmen of the Negro people, are striving to unleash a world-wide counter-revolutionary attack against the U.S.S.R.?

Is it not likewise true that President Roosevelt, chronic pussy-footer on the Anti-Lynching Bill, sent the notorious Sumner Welles to Europe in the interests of American imperialism for the purpose of organizing a bloc against the U.S.S.R.? Did not Mussolini, that great "friend" of the Negro people, and Roosevelt get together in an attempt to utilize Finland as an imperialist gateway to Leningrad, industrial heart of the U.S.S.R.? Is not Mussolini maneuvering feverishly in the Balkans trying to form a new base for anti-Soviet operations? Do not these activities, plus the benign figure of Herbert Hoover, that "great defender of American democracy and Negro rights," rushing around to raise funds and arms for the Mannerheim-Ryti murders of the Finnish people, serve as additional proof as to where the interests of the Negro people lie and whether they should line up with the imperialists against the U.S.S.R. or with the U.S.S.R. against the imperialists?

You must be aware of these facts, Messrs. Wilkins and White. How then can you go to *The New York Times*, the powerful organ of finance capital, for canards to spread among the Negroes? Are you on the side of the Negro people or on the side of their oppressors?

Petty-Bourgeois Utopian Schemes

Today national reformism, faced with the grave problems that have arisen as a result of the war danger, cracks at the first cloud that heralds the storm. The ideology of the Negro bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie is in a sharp crisis. The Negro petty bourgeoisie is in a dilemma. It hates and distrusts, but at the same time admires the white ruling class. Having turned its back on labor and its allies, and looking only to the bourgeoisie, it becomes panicky and dreams of satisfying its longing to become a full-fledged bourgeoisie "on its own." It looks slyly and wistfully to Africa. Thus arises Neo-Garveyism.

Of course, the Neo-Garveyite gentlemen, like Garvey before them, overlook such a small detail as imperialist domination of all Africa; or assume that the greedy Southern

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bourbons will voluntarily give up the exploitation of fourteen millions from whom they can extract super-profits. Yet the very ludicrousness of such an assumption only demonstrates the bankruptcy of the Negro middle class ideology, the ideology of a class torn in a number of directions simultaneously.

Garveyism and its offshoots have historical precedents. Brutal and reactionary slaveowners, frightened at the activity of "troublesome" free Negroes, concocted such a scheme to thwart threatening revolts. Speaking of the African colonization schemes, Frederick Douglass, great Negro Abolitionist, declared:

"The American Colonization Society . . . presses its scheme for our expatriation. . . . That society is an old enemy of the colored people in this country. . . . [The] black man . . . has as much right to stay in this land as the white man . . . from the beginning of the existence of this people as a people, the colored man has had a place upon the American soil. . . . Some of our number have fought and bled for this country. . . . I would ask you, my friends, if this is not mean and impudent in the extreme, for one class of Americans to ask for the removal of another class?"

But Neo-Garveyism is only one of the fantastic creations from the fertile brain of the national reformists. They have taken off the shelf an old theory now shopworn and badly damaged, which they trot out at every crucial period, the panacea: "back-to-the-farm." Of course, they overlook—as is the utopian fashion—the chronic agrarian crisis that has gripped the country since the world imperialist war, the steady seizure of the land by the big banks, the acute misery of millions of sharecroppers and tenant farmers, now aggravated by the war-and-hunger budget of Roosevelt.

These pro-war, confusing slogans are designed to answer the quest of the Negro people for a fundamental solution of their problems. Everything to avert a real anti-imperialist struggle in the direction of socialism and genuine freedom.

The Negroes and the First Imperialist War

The painful memories of their harrowing experiences in the World War still burn vividly within the minds of the Negro masses. Never will they forget the base treachery, the callous disregard of promises by the war-bent Wall Street financial moguls of 1917.

"Little" Belgium had been overrun by the "barbaric" Huns, they said. Western civilization was endangered by "Kaiserism" and "Kultur." The world must be made "safe for democracy." And you Negroes must do your part, for you have always been loyal. You must "forget your special grievances" and *after* the war is over, "you will get your just deserts," these cold-blooded stokers of human flesh pleaded. Recorded lynchings rose from 38 in 1917 to 64 in 1918 and 83 in 1919. One hand of the bourgeoisie hypocritically patted the Negro on the back, while the other, a mailed fist, gave the Negro a heavier pummeling than before.

In 1917 the labor movement was dominated by pro-war elements, the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

country lacked a Marxist party, and the influence of Negro labor was insignificant. Nevertheless, strong protests, largely individual, against American participation in the war arose among the Negroes.

The voices of the few were drowned out by the chorus of Negro reformist leaders of influential Negro organizations, particularly the N.A.A.C.P., which echoed among the Negroes the hypocritical slogan of the Wall Street bankers and munitions-makers, "close your ranks" and "forget your grievances"! "Remember Crispus Attucks! Remember the glorious 54th Massachusetts!" shouted the agents of the warmongers. Thus they cooperated with the hypocritical bourgeoisie in sending Negro youth to Europe to die for what Earl Browder and others then rightly denounced as a war to protect the Morgan loans to the Allies, a contention now universally acknowledged.

Two million, two hundred and ninety thousand, five hundred and twenty-seven Negroes were registered for service through the draft; 458,328 were examined. The percentage of rejections among whites was higher than among Negroes. Of the former, 70.41 per cent of the total registered were accepted; of Negroes, 74.60 per cent. The number of Negroes inducted into military service totalled 367,710, of whom 342,277 were finally accepted for full military service. Whereas the percentage of whites accepted for full military service was only 26.84 of the total registered, the percentage of Negroes was 31.74. About 380,000 Negroes, including draftees and members of the regular army and the National Guard, were mobilized. About 200,000 Negro troops were sent to France, and 42,000 of these were combat troops. About 1,400 Negroes were commissioned as officers.

In the training camps, the Negro soldiers met the unmitigated rule of King Jim Crow. They met at the hands of officers, mostly Southern (selected because they "knew" Negroes) grossest humiliations and the roughest manhandling. Jim-Crowism was rife. Negro troops were given the dirtiest work. Often insufficiently trained, they were thrown into battle with no regard for their lives. Army circles spread propaganda among the French that the Negroes were a sub-human species and rapists. Negroes were court-martialled for the slightest offense. White soldiers refused to salute Negro officers. Lynchings were organized. Negro wounded were ill-treated by Southern nurses and doctors.

Many Negroes, among them James W. Ford, now an outstanding leader of the Communist Party, then with the 86th brigade of the 92nd Division, protested against these outrages.

In spite of the shameless treatment of Negro soldiery, their action under fire nailed the lies spread by the bourgeoisie about the Negro's "cowardice," his unfitness to be a soldier. The Croix de Guerre was awarded by the French military authorities to a number of Negro regiments, the 369th, 370th, 371st and 372nd and to the 367th infantry for heroism. Thirty Negro officers of the 370th, officered entirely by Negroes with the exception of the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

colonel, were given medals for distinguished bravery. Medals for bravery were given to some 60 officers and around 350 Negro noncommissioned officers and privates.

What was to be the lot of the Negro soldiers when they returned home? Woodrow Wilson, from the housetops of Europe, was proclaiming the right of self-determination for all weak nations and oppressed peoples (just as Roosevelt is now doing from his desk in Washington). Was the Negro people to have its rights acknowledged in the United States?

Were the glittering promises of "just deserts," of equality, to be fulfilled now that the "German peril," the "enemy of peace and civilization and democracy" had been crushed? The hollow mockery that followed is deeply impressed in the memory of the Negro people. But some of its leaders, it seems, need to be reminded of it.

Lynchings more than doubled. Returning Negro soldiers were warned to forget that "equality stuff" and were lynched in their very uniforms. In the big centers of the North, whither capitalists had lured the Negroes during the war labor shortage and had coined millions of dollars out of their labor, they organized race riots. Negroes were hunted down like wild beasts in Chicago, East St. Louis, Washington, Winston-Salem, N. C., and Atlanta, Georgia. The crowning achievement in bourgeois insults to the Negro people came when Hoover and his Administration shipped Negro Gold Star Mothers to France on cattle boats. The much touted high wages of the war period were illusory. The cost of living soared by 106 per cent between December, 1914, and June, 1920, according to the U.S. Department of Labor—but wages advanced only 21 per cent, even in the basic war industries. For the Negro people, misery, death, poverty, increased lynch terror, sharper national oppression were the fruits of the first imperialist war —a war in which our own "democratic" imperialists were victors.

Thus, the world imperialist war strengthened the violent dictatorship over the Negro people maintained by finance capital and the Southern landlords and mill owners. The Negro masses have been subjected to this oppression for more than 74 years. Led by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, our bourbon dictators today strive again to utilize the Negroes as cannon fodder in the interests of their own oppressors.

It ill behooves Mr. Roosevelt to speak of "absolute dictatorship" in the U.S.S.R., of no "popular government with free ballot," of "freedom of small nations as a basis for peace." In the recent elections in the U.S.S.R., 98.2 per cent of the working population voted. How many Negroes, or, for that matter, poor whites, Mr. President, exercised the ballot in your Southern home state, Georgia?

Negroes are not pacifists. Although fettered by slavery, they played their part nobly in 1776 and 1861. The Negro masses are ever ready to fight for liberty, for real democracy, but not to die again for the benefit of the swollen coffers of imperialist hangmen. In this reactionary war into which Roosevelt is dragging America, nobility lies

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in resisting, not in supporting. The Negro's sacred duty to Attucks, to Vesey, to Turner, to Harriet Tubman, to Douglass, to all those who in the past dedicated their lives to the cause of Negro freedom, lies in joining hands with progressive labor and all the peace forces of America to keep the United States out of the war.

Build the Negro People's Anti-Imperialist, Anti-War Front

The forging of the Negro people's anti-imperialist, anti-war front as an integral part of that front of the whole American people is a key question in rallying the Negro masses in the struggle against war, in the struggle of the American people for peace. This unity should encompass the chief organizations among the Negro people, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Urban League, the National Negro Congress, Negro labor, the churches, and the fraternal organizations and civic groups. The question can be put: Is unity possible? The answer is that unity is not only possible but an absolute necessity, a life-and-death question for the Negro masses. True, the desertion of the so-called liberal bourgeoisie, which has connections with important strata of the Negro middle class, to the camp of war now renders the question of unity more difficult. But this in no wise lessens the importance of this question, but rather places it more sharply than ever for solution by the peace forces of the country.

The condition for unity must be the struggle against the economic, political and social effects of the war, in a word, the struggle against the war-and-hunger program of Roosevelt and finance capital, the fight to pass the Federal Anti-Lynching Bill, the struggle for the defense of civil liberties, the fight against all the concrete steps towards war taken by the Roosevelt Administration.

How should the exposure of the anti-unity forces be carried on? While in the leadership of many Negro organizations there are, on the one hand, leaders who are strongly anti-unity, leaders who are ready to raise the red scare in order to split organizations or control them in the interests of the warmongers; there are, on the other hand, leaders who are clear on the issues and others who are confused but can be clarified. Hence, it would be incorrect in this situation to act in a way to identify these organizations with their anti-unity leaders, or to identify the petty bourgeoisie as a whole with the fantastic utopian ideas which flow from the crisis of petty-bourgeois thought.

It is impossible for Negro leaders to participate in the red-scare campaign without endangering the whole cause of Negro rights. First, the struggle for Negro rights is a fight for those civil liberties already conceded—although often more in theory than in fact—to the white masses, which the Negro people have not yet attained. Therefore any curtailment of civil liberties will be felt first by the Negroes. If the Communists are outlawed, the dam will be broken and the torrent will be let loose to strike with full force all the oppressed. Under such conditions,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the reactionary forces hitting away at powerful labor organizations, what chance would Mr. Walter White and the N.A.A.C.P. have for any real struggle for Negro rights?

Or does Mr. White think he and his organization will be exempt, *i.e.*, assuming that they would carry on an earnest struggle? Moreover, is it not true that the war hysteria and the general disregard of the Bill of Rights make an ideal atmosphere in which anti-democratic, anti-Negro organizations flourish? Would it not be infinitely more difficult to fight for the enforcement of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments if the Bill of Rights, of which they are an extension, is thrown into the discard? Where then is Mr. White leading the Negro masses when he again links the Communist Party to the Nazis? "If I were a Communist, a nazi or a fascist and wanted to destroy or weaken American democracy, I would work unceasingly to prevent the passage of the Anti-Lynching legislation." (From his testimony at the U.S. Senate Hearing, February 6, 1940.) Clearly, any falling in with the reactionary plans for the persecution of Communists can only defeat the cause of Negro rights and strengthen the hand of the enemy.

Today, it is more important than ever that Negro labor assert itself and place its stamp on the Negro movement. It is necessary for progressive white labor to render all assistance to Negro labor in this task. Only the continued leadership of Negro labor in the Negro liberation movement can give the assurance that the Negro liberation movement will continue along the correct path. The struggle for proletarian hegemony is a struggle to overcome petty-bourgeois defeatism, to isolate the pro-war ideologists, to defeat national reformism, treacherous Social-Democracy, and the Lovestoneite, Trotskyite agents of the war-makers; to enable the Negro people to carry out their mission in the struggle for peace; to realize in practice the double historical role of the Negro working class, on the one hand to play an important role as an integral part of the American working class, and on the other to lead the Negro people in their struggle for national liberation.

The Unique Contributions of the Communist Party

The most implacable enemies of the Communist Party are compelled to admit that, though numerically small, it has been the most important single political organization in advancing Negro rights in the United States. The fight for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys and Angelo Herndon; the organization of the Alabama sharecroppers and of the struggle for relief and jobs for Negroes, particularly in the industrial centers; the wide popularization of the need for Negro and white unity; and the whole vigorous struggle for Negro rights initiated and carried through by the Communists, particularly from 1930 to 1935, laid the groundwork for the assumption of the struggle for Negro equality by the broad labor and democratic movement which began to take shape around 1935.

The Communist Party was able to achieve this, because, of all political

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

parties and movements, it alone understands the struggle for Negro rights in its full implications, in relation to the various classes in society and the roles they must play; because it understands the historical basis of the national oppression of the Negroes—thanks to the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

The Communist Party has been able to achieve this because it understands the Negro question in America as that of an *oppressed nation*, the historic roots of which lie in the powerful remnants of slavery (sharecropping) whose social embodiment are the Negroes. Such is the economic structure upon which arises the whole abhorrent and antidemocratic superstructure of Jim-Crowism, segregation, lynch terror, disfranchisement and chain-gang rule. The Communists have understood that every prerequisite is present for a national revolutionary struggle of the oppressed Negro nation against American imperialism, a struggle whose unfolding must inevitably lead to the exercise of the right of self-determination of the Black Belt (the establishment of majority rule—real democracy) which is finally and irrevocably guaranteed only by victorious socialism.

NOTE: In a forthcoming issue of *The Communist*, there will be another article by Theodore R. Bassett and A. W. Berry dealing with the present stage of the liberation struggle of the Negro people in the light of the basic slogan of the right to self-determination of the Negro subject nation in the Black Belt—THE EDITOR.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SHIFTING POLITICAL ALIGNMENTS IN OHIO

BY JOHN WILLIAMSON

THE State of Ohio, formerly a stronghold of the New Deal, has become a center of layoffs, closing down of mills, relief and school crises, espionage against labor, and warmongering, as a result of the unity of the bourgeoisie on a hunger-and-war program. Following the national lead of Wall Street and Roosevelt, bourgeois class unity is being consolidated by Republicans, Davey Democrats, and New Deal Democrats on all main class issues. Evidence for this is accumulating, as the following will attest.

Bourgeois Class Unity in Ohio

Not a single Democratic voice has been raised in favor of a special session of the State Legislature to deal with the burning problem of relief, despite the fact that delegations of labor and unemployed have been persistently demanding the session from Governor John Bricker. There has been a declaration of unity between Charles Sawyer, gubernatorial candidate of the New Deal wing of the Democratic Party in 1938, and his out-and-out reactionary opponent, now ex-governor Davey, immediately followed by Davey's declaration of his candidacy for governor. All sections of the bourgeoisie, from Tom Girdler through the Republican Mayor Burton of Cleveland to the former New Dealers, have jointly participated in the Hoover war (alleged relief) committees. The Chamber of Commerce and every spokesman of the Republican and Democratic Parties are again united in opposition to the Bigelow Old-Age Pension Referendum Plan. Increased tax levies are now receiving united support from Republicans and Democrats. Both the Republicans and Sawyer made similar declarations against John L. Lewis' criticism of Roosevelt at the Miners' Convention.

This unity of the Ohio bourgeoisie has the same reactionary objectives as the demagogic "national unity." It will mean increased and better planned attacks against the people, especially against the workers and their living standards. Already we have seen indications of this offensive against the workers, their conditions, and organizations, and its results in greater profit for the employers.

Despite the ballyhoo accompanying the temporary pickup in certain industries during the last quarter of 1939—a press campaign that even fooled some workers—the economic situation is taking a sharp turn for the worse. Steel production in

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Youngstown was down to 32 in March after reaching the high point of over 90 last December. As a result of this drop, many mills are closing down altogether. Some smaller companies operating at high capacity throughout the depression, thanks to government W.P.A. orders, have dropped to 40-45 per cent of capacity. All basic industries, especially steel and rubber, are now beginning to go back to layoffs and staggered work. It should be carefully noted that new methods of speed-up and rationalization, first introduced during the short upward spurt of increased production, constitute an important factor in this drop. An examination of the figures will show that in most industries there is a greater productivity per man than heretofore. Fewer men were taken back during "recovery," and the speed-up rate of production already established will be maintained as production drops again. Hence, we are faced with the prospect of still greater layoffs. In the steel industry, especially in the rolling and pipe departments, men with five to twelve years' service are being laid off now.

Governor Bricker brought forward this temporary increase of industrial production as the main argument to justify starving the unemployed. The same argument was used by President Roosevelt to justify W.P.A. cuts. While this false optimism was fed to the people, relief figures actually increased. Confronted today with the new layoffs, the entire State and practically every industrial locality are facing new relief crises on a larger scale than ever before.

These relief roll figures for Ohio tell the story:

November, 1938	85,000
January, 1939	100,000
March, 1939	96,000
August, 1939	111,000
September, 1939	120,000

Instead of being increased to meet the need, Ohio W.P.A. is being cut. This again adds to the total unemployed, many of whom cannot even get on relief.

The scandalously low allowance per relief case in Ohio, as compared with other States, is evident from the following figures:

	Per case per month
Ohio	$16.18
Illinois	20.29
Michigan	20.83
Pennsylvania	30.74
New York	34.28

Increase in food prices is commonplace. Rents, especially in Cleveland, have increased 15-20 per cent over 1935. School finances are in crisis, and Ohio presented the spectacle of a large city like Toledo closing its schools for nearly two months. Early in the year as it is, Cleveland is again facing a crisis, which will mean either closing down schools part time or cutting teachers' wages. These are some of the conditions facing the people of Ohio.

As far as the bankers and employers are concerned, the picture is entirely different. While relief and school crises develop, their own interest is paid regularly from the sinking funds. Profits for Ohio firms reached new "highs" for 1939, especially in the last quarter. A few typical examples follow:

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

	Net Profits for 1939	*Net Profits for 1938*
Republic Steel	$10,671,343	$7,997,825*
Youngstown Sheet & Tube	5,004,484	658,934*
Thompson Products, Inc.	1,232,199	435,241
Industrial Rayon	1,348,924	184,410
Eaton Mfg. Co.	2,707,399	23,154
Glidden Paint Co.	1,853,549	205,597
Cleveland Graphite	1,745,123	309,658

* Deficit.

The Goodyear Tire and Republic Companies had a net profit, after putting aside $4,500,000 in reserve for "poor" years, of $9,838,797, or an increase of 64 per cent over 1938.

The workers must be shown that "national unity" means unity of the big trusts with the Republican and Democratic Parties, under Roosevelt's leadership, to pursue imperialist aims. Imperialist wars abroad, increased exploitation of the workers at home, attacks on the workers' living standards, their civil rights, and their organizations are the ways to which Big Business resorts to pile up vaster profits.

The Workers' Opposition to the War

The workers in Ohio, as elsewhere, are overwhelmingly opposed to participation in the war. This opposition has been manifested in many ways. Scores of resolutions against Roosevelt's war budget and against loans to Finland have been adopted by local unions and central labor councils. The Cleveland Federation of Labor has condemned British imperialism for its attack on the Irish people. Nearly one hundred local union leaders of Akron, many of them A. F. of L. officials, have signed an anti-war declaration, which included opposition to loans to Finland. The workers of the largest department of a Barberton factory have demonstratively burned "Finnish Relief" letters sent by the management to each worker. A conservative A. F. of L. union in a small Ohio town opposed a request by the company management for union collaboration in collecting money from each worker for the Hoover War (Relief) Committee.

"Yanks Are Not Coming" Committees have been set up in a number of local unions and other organizations, and 20,000 pamphlets of the same name have been bought for distribution by Ohio local unions. Local unions and union councils in a number of cities, like Akron, Cleveland, Youngstown, Dayton, and Toledo, are initiating some form of anti-war action on April 6, the twenty-third anniversary of America's entry into the last imperialist war. A successful Youth Peace Conference was held in Cleveland, with 160 delegates from 90 organizations. It is also significant that, as far as we know, not a single labor leader in Ohio, no matter how conservative, has acted with local Hoover committees.

The Demagogy of the Bourgeoisie Must Be Blasted

While these facts indicate on the part of the workers a clear-cut opposition to America's participation in the imperialist war, there is not nearly the clarity or definiteness with respect to the maneuvers and demagogic devices of the bourgeoisie to overcome the workers' opposition to the war.

There is not yet manifest among the workers a clear understanding of the reactionary role of the Finn-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ish bankers and landlords as tools of British and American imperialists who are trying to extend the area of warfare, and especially to turn it into a counter-revolutionary, anti-Soviet war. The workers, especially the trade unionists, are not being shown convincingly enough that, unless they fight actively against efforts to get American support for the imperialist powers (as was the case with the campaign for loans to Finland), that unless they struggle effectively against dragging our country into the war, the life of trade unions, as well as the conditions won by the workers' struggles, are at stake in the war drive of the united bourgeoisie. The workers are not being made sufficiently conscious that effective anti-war work requires still more active defense against attack from both government and employers upon their economic conditions, upon their unions and their civil rights. They are not being clarified as to all the implications of the actual role of the American imperialists, who are working to prolong the war (with all its consequences for the toilers) for the purpose of extending Wall Street's hegemony in Latin America and the Far East while they are piling up profits at home, who, in the course of all of this, are preparing the war drive against the Soviet Union, the only great power that is a world rallying force for peace and socialism.

It is imperative to bring about the understanding that the struggle against imperialist war is inseparable from the struggle against our own bourgeoisie. In practice this demands unflinching opposition to the war policies of the Roosevelt Administration, as well as to its attacks on the people at home.

It devolves upon Communists everywhere to raise these issues clearly and sharply among the workers. We must do this wherever there may be confusion—yes, even opposition. *How* the issues are raised in different organizations and in different circumstances depends on the specific instance, but raise them we must. What we must here emphasize is boldness, and more boldness!

Toward an Anti-Imperialist People's Front Party

We have found that, wherever discussion has been initiated and centered about Roosevelt's desertion of the reform elements of the New Deal program, and wherever mass movements have been organized and developed by the people's organizations around the burning issues of the day, a growing clarity emerges, especially in the ranks of the workers, as to the necessity for labor and all anti-war forces to oppose equally the two old parties and Roosevelt and move towards independent political action, through a third ticket or third party, in the 1940 elections.

Numerous resolutions have been adopted by local unions on these questions, and a growing number are expressing opposition to a third term for Roosevelt. Both A. F. of L. and C.I.O. locals are joining this movement. The newspapers report many hours of debate over a third-term endorsement for Roosevelt in the C.I.O. councils of Cleveland,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Akron, Barberton and Toledo. Such proposals were defeated in all of these councils. This position, however, is not yet held by all unions and generally progressive organizations. The Cincinnati Labor's Non-Partisan League County Convention, by a majority vote, the Cleveland Joint Board of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America have endorsed Roosevelt. Since the Miners' Convention at Columbus, discussions on this question are going on in local unions throughout the state. Locals of the C.I.O. are being circularized by the Hosiery Workers' Union and by some Pennsylvania Steel Workers Organizing Committee locals asking for a third-term endorsement for Roosevelt.

While there is a growing recognition of Roosevelt's changed role, there has not yet developed on a broad scale a clear understanding of the need of "a third party, instead of a third term," as Comrade Browder put it. This continued, though questioning, faith in the old two-party system reveals that, while the class consciousness of the Ohio workers has deepened with regard to many current problems, it has not yet developed to the point of asserting the class position independently in the political field. These hesitations on independent political action do not mean that "it can't be done." We must take into account the momentum of the peculiar forms which the democratic front movement of the people took in recent years. While developing the embryo of a people's democratic movement in 1935-39 around the progressive features of the New Deal, this movement remained within the folds of the Democratic Party. This form of the democratic front was peculiarly American, because of our traditional two-party system. It is now our task to convert this people's movement, expressed in the democratic coalition of the New Deal era, into a new form—a People's Front Party of an anti-war, anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly character.

In Ohio two special Congressional elections have recently been held, which showed a swing back to the Republican Party, after a progressive trend in some cities had appeared in the 1939 municipal elections. In view of the unity of the bourgeoisie on the platform of the Wall Street economic royalists, this trend to the Republicans in the Congressional elections was not surprising, and will be a general trend in the 1940 elections, except as modified by Roosevelt's personal influence. These special election results in Ohio only indicate more emphatically the need for a third party. The traditional independent bloc of votes in Ohio, the beginnings of independent political action of a part of labor through Labor's Non-Partisan League, the discontent of the farmers, the growing political consciousness of the youth, the half-million supporters of the Bigelow Old-Age Pension Plan who were spat upon by both old parties, the Negro people, who have been deserted by the Roosevelt New Dealers, and the mighty strength of labor—all of these open up the possibilities and direction for a third party movement in Ohio.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our Tasks Among the Progressive Masses

The chief contribution of the Communist Party will be a vigorous campaign for its state and national ticket. Just as our Party campaign in 1936 helped to strengthen and give direction to the forces of the developing democratic front at that time expressing itself through the New Deal, so in 1940 our Communist Party campaign can strengthen, clarify and speed up the unity of the people in the direction of a third party. This task demands that the Communist Party election campaign be carried on as the most important in the history of our state. We must place our state and national Party ticket on the ballot in Ohio by the collection of 50,000 signatures. This is the most urgent task before the Party.

We must, further, collaborate with all those progressive forces striving towards separation from the old two-party system and towards independent political action by the working class, whether expressed through movements for a third party, a third ticket, or a labor ticket, or whether still operating inside the old party primaries as separately organized movements with their own platform, in opposition to the platform and leadership of the two old parties.

We must also clearly understand that the movement of the Bigelow supporters to continue the fight for the old-age pension plan in the 1940 elections is essentially progressive. This movement can be made most effective by linking it with a renewed fight to put the pension plan on the ballot. It would have the greatest effect if it were to set up a coalition with labor and all other progressive forces and conduct its struggle as a third-party movement.

Furthermore, we must support labor in building Labor's Non-Partisan League, holding Congressional legislative conferences, and stimulating discussion everywhere, in the shops, local unions, on W.P.A. projects, and in workers' neighborhoods. The next few months should become a period of great discussion among the people—discussion which can bring clarity and be followed by independent political action.

We can best carry on the struggle against imperialist war and the American warmongers led by the Roosevelt Administration, and we can best clarify the need for a third party, by unceasingly tying up these issues with the struggle for the immediate economic demands of the employed and unemployed workers, with defense of civil rights and the rights of the trade unions, and with organizing drives of the unions in all industries. The struggle for increased relief and W.P.A. jobs is one of the most urgent of all these issues. It is necessary to build the Workers Alliance at the same time that the unions are again concerning themselves with the unemployed. So far as the employed and part-time employed are concerned, it is not enough to demand renewal of existing contracts. A fight must also be made to improve the shop and wage conditions of the workers, and especially to obtain better machinery for dealing with their grievances.

A new period of aggressive eco-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nomic struggles is now opening. They must be joined with the political struggles of the day. We must approach new organizational drives in the main unorganized industries of the state, such as "little steel," aluminum, metal machinery, and electrical, with this perspective. Attention to the workers' economic problems and their struggles is equally important in all industries whether they are organized by the A. F. of L. or the C.I.O.

The masses of workers organized into the broad anti-fascist democratic front movement of yesterday are a solid progressive force, ready and willing to continue the fight under new conditions against all forces of reaction today. The circumstances are favorable to organize these workers in the fight against the warmongers and profiteers of a united bourgeoisie. Not all are clear on the complicated nature of the imperialist war; not all are fully aware that the bourgeoisie of the capitalist democracies have adopted the Hitler method of saving capitalism; not all see clearly the liberating role of the Soviet Union and the consistent class leadership of our Party. Nevertheless, there is manifest the basic progressiveness of the working class as well as the great possibilities for the fulfilment of its class responsibilities.

This mighty progressive movement which developed during the past few years, of which the working class was the base, although its rallying point was the New Deal, is at the crossroads. Its liberal bourgeois component has deserted to the side of Wall Street and is today leading the attacks of those same economic royalists, whom it condemned only a short few months before. The mass progressive movement is in process of readjustment in leadership and in consolidation of its forces. It must assume new tasks under new conditions. There are already important signs that the mass movement of the people has seen the direction it should take.

The Communists of Ohio must realize that not only are they a part of the working class, but that they have a special vanguard responsibility towards the working class. What does that mean? Let us refresh our memories. Marx and Engels set forth the role of the Communists in *The Manifesto of the Communist Party:*

"They have no interests . . . apart from those of the proletariat as a whole. . . .

"The Communists . . . are . . . practically the most advanced and resolute section of the working class . . . that section which pushes forward all others; . . . theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement." (*The Manifesto of the Communist Party,* p. 22, International Publishers, New York.)

In his *Foundations of Leninism,* Stalin later elaborated these principles and declared:

"The Party cannot be a real party if it limits itself to registering what the . . . working class thinks and experiences, if it drags along at the tail-end of the spontaneous movement, or if it does not know how

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to overcome the inertness and the political indifference of the spontaneous movement, . . . if it cannot raise the masses to the level of the class interests of the proletariat." (Joseph Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, p. 88, International Publishers, New York.)

How clear these statements are! These two simple paragraphs should be written indelibly into the thinking and practice of every Party member and leader, particularly of those active in the mass movements. They should remind us of the great responsibilities of the Party and its leadership. We must make it our task:

1. To strengthen the ties of the Party with the decisive sections of the working class in the steel, auto, rubber, electrical, metal machinery, and marine industries, and in the big shops.

2. To liquidate the remnants of bourgeois influences which have weakened the ties of the Party with the Negro people and retarded the development of mass struggles, supported by the white workers and their organizations, for equal rights for the Negro people.

3. To extend the mass agitation of the Party, with special attention to mass literature distribution and the extensive circulation of the *Daily Worker* and the *Sunday Worker*.

4. To overcome immediately the unsatisfactory organizational situation, by intensive recruiting activity, improvement of dues payments, and better organization of the work in the branches.

5. To raise the theoretical level of our Party through classes, schools and individual study, and a 50 per cent increase in the circulation of *The Communist*.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE ORGANIZATION OF AN ELECTION CAMPAIGN

BY ISRAEL AMTER

"WHAT did this election [in the 14th Congressional District of New York] show? It showed, first of all, that while there did exist a potential majority of the people against both old parties, the situation had not matured to crystallize that majority behind the Communist Party at the moment. . . .

"When we proceed to a closer analysis of what happened, we find the following, in comparing 1940 with the last general election in 1938: Whereas that year when we were in a bloc with the American Labor Party and the New Deal and when our vote was decisive in defeating Dewey and electing Governor Lehman, and we were going with the stream, we received 11.6 per cent of the vote cast in the 14th Congressional District—on February 6, 1940, after five months of the most strenuous united attacks upon us by every other political camp, when the American Labor Party leadership together with the Democratic Party were waging a war of extermination against us, what happened as a result of this change of forces? . . .

"The Democratic Party dropped 45 per cent of its total vote, or almost 20 per cent of its proportion of the total vote—from 69 per cent to 57 per cent, while the Communist Party advanced from 11.6 per cent to 13.6 per cent. In other words, we were the only political organization which advanced its proportion of votes in this district. The Republicans stood still—in proportion. . . .

"I think we can say realistically that our Party has held its ranks solid, has multiplied its effective work, and has extended its influence deeper among the masses. That is unquestionable." (Earl Browder, *The People Against the War-Makers*, pp. 21-22, Workers Library Publishers, New York.)

Here we have stated in succinct form by the General Secretary of the Communist Party the main political features of the special election in the 14th Congressional District. The campaign was equally fruitful in organizational lessons which can profitably be studied by our Party throughout the country, especially since it was characterized by Comrade Browder as the best election campaign ever conducted by the Communist Party.

Comrade Browder's own contribution as a splendid campaigner went far to make this evaluation possible, as did the active participation of hundreds of leading comrades. In the main, the Browder

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

election campaign excelled in planning, organization and execution of decisions.

The County Committee, within whose jurisdiction the 14th Congressional District lies, elected a campaign committee headed by Comrade Peter V. Cacchione, leader of the Communist Party in Brooklyn, and Comrade Hank Forbes, executive secretary of the Party in New York County. The organizers of the assembly districts whose territories constitute the 14th Congressional District were members of the campaign committee. The committee not only planned and organized the campaign, but carefully checked up on all decisions, insuring the results of which Comrade Browder spoke in his report at the National Committee meeting.

This was the only campaign in New York City at the time. Consequently, a larger number of really experienced and capable Party forces could be placed at work in the campaign. The committee took particular account of the rich experience the Brooklyn comrades had gained in the two Cacchione election campaigns. The aid of these comrades facilitated considerably the work of planning, organizing and checking.

The following campaign factors were taken into consideration: Party forces; literature; meetings, broadcasts, and other agitational activities; election day organization; and finances.

Party Forces

The best and most experienced canvassers from all parts of the city were drawn into the Congressional District—a procedure which would have been difficult in a general election campaign. The results obtained indicate that even in general elections, it is advisable that the Party concentrate on certain favorable sub-divisions—Congressional, county, assembly district, or precinct—so that while general attention is given to all subdivisions, special concentration is directed upon selected areas.

The campaign committee decided not to use all the Party members of the 14th Congressional District on the canvassing force, but selected only capable and experienced comrades, both residents and non-residents of the District. These constituted the main force for carrying through the campaign.

Those comrades residing in the 14th Congressional District who were not directly involved in canvassing had other tasks to perform. They were the ones to carry on the neighborhood activities: to increase the sale of the *Daily Worker*, and language papers, to engage in general distribution of campaign literature.

A captain and co-captain headed the comrades working in the election district,* forming an election district group. In addition to canvassing, the captain and co-captain had the task of checking the reports of the canvassers, thus establishing where the most favorable responses had been secured. This activity is important, since it makes possible a final concentration upon probable or potential voters for our ticket, without losing valuable time

* Corresponding to a precinct in other states.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

knocking again at doors where the reaction has been unfavorable.

To a certain degree, we concentrated upon enrolled members of the American Labor Party, who are, in the main, progressives. (The list of enrolled voters of the political parties can be obtained from the Board of Elections.) In every neighborhood, there are progressive groups and organizations, whose membership lists are obtainable. In the course of collecting signatures to place our candidate upon the ballot, we met not only progressive, but radically-minded people. Such contacts are invaluable, not only for securing votes, but for obtaining readers of our literature as well as recruits to the Party.

Campaign Literature

The issuance and distribution of literature must be well planned. With alertness to every development, the campaign committee must be prepared to issue statements and leaflets and use the radio to answer attacks. The character and timing of literature must be carefully determined in advance.

The campaign began with a letter by Comrade Browder mailed to each enrolled voter. This was followed at designated times by two other pieces of literature. Then came a message from Comrade Browder to the voters summing up the issues of the campaign. During the final week, a newspaper was issued to all the voters.

Leaflets announcing meetings, as well as election-day instructions to aid the voters at the polls, were issued in the important languages.

The following procedures must be followed: (a) The letters and folders must be attractively printed—rather a smaller quantity if necessary, but more effective agitation; (b) The folders must not appear so often as to flood the voters; (c) The material, instead of being distributed on the streets, should be taken by canvassers into the homes and left with the voters, whether or not they have indicated their intention of voting for our candidate.

Special attention must be paid to the particular attitudes of the national groups. It is necessary at all times to make a clear analysis of the social and national-group composition of the voters. In the 14th Congressional District there are nearly forty national groups. Of these, the Jews, Italians, Poles, Russians and Ukrainians are the most numerous. Party members of the corresponding national groups were selected for work in the district, and campaign material was issued in the four main languages.

It does not suffice, however, merely to translate a general appeal into the important languages. An example will explain. In the 6th Assembly District, which is part of the 14th Congressional District, there is a large group of Jewish voters, mainly middle-aged and elderly people. The Browder election campaign took place during the period of the Nazi occupation of Western Poland, the liberation by the Red Army of the Jews and other nationalities in Eastern Poland, as well as during the Finnish situation. The Jews in the 6th Assembly District were being barraged by reactionary, anti-Soviet propa-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ganda of all varieties. Because of insufficient educational work among them prior to the campaign on our part, many of them were quite antagonistic. As a result, the Browder vote among this section of the electorate suffered.

The *Daily Worker* and language newspapers did not play so important a part as they should have. Only one mass distribution of the *Daily Worker* was provided for. The systematic sale of the *Daily Worker* and the language press should have been the continuous task of the members of the branches not directly involved in the canvassing work. They should have daily taken the *Daily Worker* out on the streets, so as to keep the electorate in constant contact with the election campaign and other phases of Party work.

Agitational Activities

In the early part of a campaign our Party prepares the field through leaflets, meetings, rallies, etc. The campaign proper requires most careful planning. Thus, in the 14th Congressional District only two large general rallies were arranged, both of which were addressed by Comrade Browder. In addition, well planned meetings were held among the national groups, as well as rallies organized by the women's committee and the youth.

Experience has shown that indoor meetings, especially during an election campaign, are well attended by Party members. In the case of a leading candidate like Comrade Browder, we faced the danger that the halls would be filled with Party members, thus excluding the non-Party voters. The campaign committee therefore decided to base admittance on invitations distributed in house-to-house canvassing. This insured that at least 70 to 80 per cent of the audience would be non-Party voters, the Party members forming the overflow.

From this experience, we can learn a lesson for general practice in our Party, namely, that for every Party gathering or meeting invitation cards be issued in addition to leaflets. These cards should be numbered and allotted to comrades canvassing the homes. Each canvasser should keep a record of where he leaves each card, so that we may be enabled to check up on the response. By thus securing names and addresses of people who come to our meetings, we can reach new, definite contacts for the campaigns of the Party and for recruiting.

Symposia are another means for presenting our candidates to broad non-Party organizations. It is not necessary that our candidate remain at the symposium the whole evening; he can leave, provided another competent comrade remains to answer questions.

House meetings are extremely important. They can be arranged either by Party members or sympathizers in a particular area. Small meetings of five, ten or twenty people create an intimate relationship between the group and the Party candidate or representative. Many people who will not ask questions at mass meetings and forums will be far more inclined to do so at small gatherings. Such

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

meetings are especially important among housewives who are unable to attend mass meetings in the evening. Such meetings also make it possible to increase the circulation of our Party press and literature and to recruit new members.

At times, we may tend to an excess of open air meetings, however necessary such meetings may be. The basis of our work must be placed in the homes, where we can personally contact the people and meet their problems.

Broadcasts should be carefully planned as to hour and day, so as to reach the largest number of listeners. Broadcasts to the housewives are very important; these can take place during the daytime. All broadcasts, however, must be announced through leaflets, cards, etc., which should be distributed directly in the homes.

Posters, as our campaign showed, are an effective agitational medium. As a precaution against hooliganism, an extra supply of posters should be kept on hand to replace those that may be torn down or defaced. In the Browder campaign, buttons, stickers, etc., formed additional campaign material.

Election Day Organization

However efficiently these tasks may be carried out, much that is gained will be lost, if we are remiss in adequate, careful and minute preparation and organization of our work on election day.

For election day we need watchers inside the polling places; people outside the polls with placards, literature and instructions; people to conduct the voters to the polls. We must also be prepared to meet any emergency.

Watchers at the polls must know their rights. Information on such matters can be obtained from the boards of elections. We must never fail to hold preparation meetings of Communist Party watchers.

A check-up should be made of the registered voters' lists, which can be obtained from the boards of elections. Very often "floaters" are brought in by the bourgeois parties. Through check-up, we shall be in a position to challenge questionable characters.

In the 14th Congressional District all available forces were mobilized on election day. Some were assigned to watch at the polls, others were stationed outside, and relief was organized for both groups. These forces worked under the direction of the election district captain and co-captain. The captains of five or six election districts were placed under the direction of a marshal, who toured the polling places in a car with an attorney. Any incident at a polling place was quickly reported to the captain and through him to the marshal, and if necessary to the Assembly District headquarters of the Party where other attorneys were stationed.

While canvassing, the comrades learned at what hour of the day the voter would be at the polls. Party watchers were at the polls before they opened. Each watcher had a list of voters in his election district, with the probable or potential Communist Party voters and the intended voting hour marked off. If the voter did not turn up at the hour indicated, a canvasser

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

went to the house to escort the voter to the polls. Each watcher also had a well-prepared list of challenges.

Particular attention was paid to the women voters, especially the housewives. We took note of the fact that between 9 and 11 a.m. and between 1 and 3 p.m., when the children are at school, the housewife is freer to go out to vote. We sent a car to working class homes to take the women voters to the polls. A woman comrade went along, offering to take care of the baby, where necessary. This "small detail" is very important.

As the day wore on, the best canvassers were sent to the homes to get the voters to the polls. It is just at such periods that floaters are rushed into the polls. Hence it is necessary towards the end of the day to have all available forces on hand. In spite of a hard day's work, watchers must remain at the polls, since otherwise votes can be stolen.

Finances

Finances are a basic element of our campaigns and must be carefully planned and organized; otherwise the campaign will suffer in every respect. We did not gain new experiences in finances during the Browder campaign, and therefore must stress those lessons that we have accumulated in the course of our Party's campaigns generally.

Conclusion

These were the outstanding characteristics of the excellently planned and conducted Browder election campaign. In the hands of the Party organization of the 14th Congressional District are lists of thousands of voters, with valuable data for our agitational work and our recruiting activity among the masses. Each voter in the Congressional District received three or four pieces of Party literature. We have the names and addresses of contacts established through the other campaigns of our Party. If these contacts are revisited and cultivated through a systematic follow-up, we shall find, as the Browder campaign showed, that we have turned many an opponent into a neutral, many a skeptic into a friend. Many of these friends can be made Party members. It should be emphasized, however, that the follow-up activity must be conducted.

Planning and organization of the campaign in the 14th Congressional District have given us a pattern applicable to many parts of the country. It can of course be improved and extended. New experiences should reach the whole Party through the Party press.

We are now preparing for Presidential, state and Congressional elections. By using the experiences of the 14th Congressional District, we should make tremendous headway in all parts of the country, provided the experiences of the Browder campaign are adapted to the given situations in the other cities and towns.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHARLES EMIL RUTHENBERG: FIGHTER AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR

(July 9, 1882—March 2, 1927)

BY OAKLEY JOHNSON

ACCORDING to *The Red Network,* that ridiculous and even amusing product of Mrs. Elizabeth Dilling's frenzied research, the City of Cleveland, Ohio, "is designated 'Ruthenberg' on U. S. maps redrawn by Soviets for 'after the revolution.'" Despite the fact that no such maps exist outside her own imagination, we can agree that Mrs. Dilling has for once made a constructive suggestion. For Cleveland was the birthplace of Charles Emil Ruthenberg, outstanding leader of the Communist movement in the United States until his death in 1927.

Those who saw Ruthenberg stand so commandingly and purposefully before the conference of the Left wing of the Socialist Party which met in New York in the spring of 1919 did not, in all likelihood, realize what stature he had already reached as a tested working-class revolutionist. Both he and they had in the main outgrown the limitations of the Socialist Party; but he above all had attained a real degree of maturity in the class struggle.

Ruthenberg came to this conference shortly after serving a ten-month sentence for opposition to the first imperialist World War; before serving his sentence, he had used the capitalist court as a forum to challenge the United States Government on the issues of the war. Before that, he had led the insurgents at the St. Louis Convention of the Socialist Party, held in April, 1917, at the very time the United States entered the war, in the successful fight against the opportunists for an anti-war stand; still earlier, he had achieved national recognition as an indefatigable political organizer. Already steeled in the struggle against imperialism, Ruthenberg was destined, in the months and years following the Left-wing conference, to be a leader in the founding and building of the Communist Party.

"In all the vital events of these times—the Socialist Party fight against the war, the formation of the Communist Party, etc.—the central Left-wing figure," says William Z. Foster, "was Charles Emil Ruthenberg." He was, says Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, "one of the first American leaders of the Leninist type."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At the present time, with the second imperialist war a grim actuality, and with powerful forces again intriguing for American involvement, it is important for us to review Ruthenberg's magnificent fight more than twenty years ago, and, since this is the thirteenth anniversary of his death, to do homage to his memory.

With Eugene V. Debs, he shared the honor of leading the anti-war militants of the old Socialist Party; with William Z. Foster—as Alex Bittelman points out in *Milestones in the History of the Communist Party*—he shared the honor of bringing into one Party the two main streams of American working class development:

"Ruthenberg's experiences had been acquired in the Socialist Party, chiefly on the political field; Foster's, on the other hand, were acquired mainly on the trade union field."

On June 22, 1912, writing in the Columbus *Socialist*, Ruthenberg said: "The concentration of industry will go on. The industrial power of the master class will increase." This process, he said, meant oppression and further exploitation for the workers, and he saw clearly that preparation must be made to meet this threat.

"We Socialists have faith in the working class," he went on to say. "We believe the workers have advanced too far to submit to industrial slavery, and therefore our confidence that they will assert their power to bring into existence the only alternative to capitalist despotism, which is the social ownership of the already socialized means of production."

This faith in the working class and in the power of the working class revealed itself in his stand, five years later, at the St. Louis Convention of the Socialist Party, where, as a member of the Committee on War and Militarism, he pounded as much revolutionary content as he could into the anti-war Resolution that was adopted at that time. During the debates on the Resolution, Ruthenberg and his supporters pressed for vital amendments to the draft submitted by the Committee, but could not muster enough support to make all the changes they wished. Nevertheless, thanks chiefly to Ruthenberg, the Resolution, although not free of confusion, was militant in tone and laid the blame for the war directly on capitalism.

"The efforts of the capitalists of all leading nations," says the Resolution, in part, "were, therefore, centered upon the domination of the world markets. Imperialism became the dominant note in the politics of Europe. The acquisition of colonial possessions and the extension of spheres of influence became the object of diplomatic intrigues and the cause of constant clashes between nations. . . . The ghastly war in Europe was not caused by an accidental event, nor by the policy or institutions of any single nation. It was the logical outcome of the competitive capitalist system."

The Resolution exposed and condemned our own imperialist war-makers.

"Our entrance into the European war was instigated by the preda-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tory capitalists in the United States who boast of the enormous profits of seven billion dollars from the manufacture and sale of munitions and war supplies," it declared.

And again:

"Our entrance into the European conflict at this time will serve only to multiply the horrors of war, to increase the toll of death and destruction and to prolong the fiendish slaughter."

The Resolution, furthermore, issued a ringing call to action. The workers should not "suspend their struggle" in time of war, it said, and declared, "we recommend to the workers and pledge ourselves to the following course of action:

"1. Continuous, active, and public opposition to the war, through demonstration, mass petitions, and all other means within our power.

"2. Unyielding opposition to all proposed legislation for military or industrial conscription. Should such conscription be forced upon the people, we pledge ourselves to continuous efforts for the repeal of such laws, and to the support of all mass movements in opposition to conscription. . . ."

Such was the uncompromising anti-war pledge of the Socialist Party carried in the St. Louis Convention Resolution, largely as the result of Ruthenberg's vigorous and militant leadership.

The report received 141 votes at the Convention, and a second resolution against the war received 31 votes; the pro-war resolution, offered by John Spargo, received only five votes. In the referendum to the Socialist Party membership afterward, in which the different anti-war planks of the majority Resolution were voted on separately, the lowest affirmative vote was 21,000, while the highest negative vote on any plank was only 4,000. This shows how strong was the anti-war conviction of the party membership. What is more, although the pro-war Socialists withdrew at once from the party, the membership grew in two months, April to June, 1917, as a direct result of this stand, from 67,788 to 81,172.

* * *

Unlike Hillquit and the other Right-wing Socialist leaders, who shamelessly sabotaged the carrying out of the anti-war Resolution, Ruthenberg took the Resolution to the masses, fought boldly for it, and was the first prominent Socialist to go to prison in its defense. It was as the result of Ruthenberg's uncompromising stand that Debs, nearly a year later, spoke up for Ruthenberg and other convicted Socialists. It was after his talk with Ruthenberg in his cell in the Canton Workhouse that Debs made his historic speech against the Espionage Law and against the war, which resulted in his being sentenced to prison for ten years.

The year before, June 28, 1917, Ruthenberg had been arrested for anti-war activities, and on July 25 was sentenced to prison. "I am conscious only of having made appeals to men for a better method of living," said Ruthenberg briefly, after the sentence, according to the Cleveland *Leader*. "If that is a crime, I am proud to have committed it."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

During the progress of the trial, he had given a clear and uncompromising declaration of his position on the war, reproducing in substance the speech he had delivered the preceding May 27, for which he had been arrested.

"This is not a war for freedom," he said. "It is not a war for the liberties of mankind. It is a war to secure the investments and profits of the ruling class of this country. . . . The only reason we are in this war now is because it is to the interests of the ruling class, the capitalist class of this country, to have us in the war. . . . We of the Socialist Party are carrying on this fight. . . . We are here to organize the workers of this country for this struggle. We are working towards this end, that out of the chaos of this war there may come a new society, a new world, a new organization of the people, which will end the cause of war by ending the private ownership of industry which brings war into existence."

That was two years before the organization of the Left-wing movement within the Socialist Party, and more than two years before the organization of the Communist Party, September, 1919, of which Ruthenberg was founder and became first General Secretary.

As an organizer, Ruthenberg had shown marked ability in the old Socialist Party before the war, especially in his native state of Ohio, where he had built up a wide popular following. As founder of the Communist Party and as Party organizer, his unusual gifts of leadership were developed ever further, under the inspiration of the October Socialist Revolution, and under the guidance of Leninist teachings. He devoted himself completely to building the vanguard organization of the American working class, carrying out his set purpose in the face of great difficulties, especially during the period when the Party was outlawed.

* * *

During the ten years between his first arrest and his death, Ruthenberg was arrested numberless times, constantly under indictment or in jail, meanly and brutally persecuted. "No individual in the labor movement in the United States," said *The Communist* (December 6, 1919), "has been more shamelessly hounded than Comrade Ruthenberg."

But Ruthenberg was never dismayed, never discouraged. He faced official torture with the calm of one who understood the nature of the class forces arrayed against him, and with the confidence that came from the certainty that eventually the working class would act decisively in its own behalf against the war-makers and capitalist oppressors, and thus vindicate the position he was taking.

"In those stormy times he had the utmost courage," says Ella Reeve Bloor, in describing the way Ruthenberg met the most difficult and sometimes the most perilous situations. "He was very calm, very diplomatic, very forceful. He always commanded the situation. I don't think he had one minute of fear."

Ruthenberg's poised and analytical manner, and his incisive and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

never-disturbed logic, were a source of much annoyance to the courts, in their constant schemes to shut him up through prison sentences. "Ruthenberg an Adroit Witness," says *The New York Times* headline, March 28, 1923, and the story reporting the trial in the Bridgeman, Michigan, case, begins thus: "Ruthenberg was on the witness stand all day today, and again had the better of the battle of wits with [Assistant Prosecutor] Mr. Gore."

In his ability to explain fundamental principles clearly and simply to the masses, Ruthenberg was very much like Earl Browder. "We have sufficient land and raw material and the laborers and machinery to produce enough for all the people," said Ruthenberg on one occasion, in explaining how easily socialism could be introduced in America. "We have everything necessary for production and distribution and many consumers ready to use what is produced, and yet these are not correlated." (Cleveland *Citizen*, February 18, 1911.) Similarly, in *What Is Communism?*, Browder says today, "The United States, in short, contains already all the prerequisites for a Communist society. . . ." Again, Ruthenberg, in explaining the idea of a socialist society, said, in a speech during the Bridgeman trial in Michigan, May, 1923: "This idea is not a scheme or plan developed by the Communists but is something which grew up and is a product of the social production under the capitalist system itself." And Browder, setting forth the significance of the Communist Party, says: "The Communist Party was not suddenly invented by some bright young man. It grew up out of years of struggle and experience, participated in by hundreds of thousands and even millions of people."

Last year, on the occasion of the Party's twentieth anniversary, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn paid a fine tribute to Ruthenberg, whose deathbed message to America's workers was, "Build the Party. . . . Let's fight on!" She said:

> "We pledge to you, Comrade C. E. Ruthenberg, founder and organizer of our Communist Party of the U.S.A., that we will follow you in your final admonition to 'Build the Party!' You bequeathed to us an understanding that agitation and struggle are not enough, that a *will to power* must be created in the people. . . . You bequeathed to us the example of a brave leader, willing to bear the brunt of all struggles, never asking of others what you were not ready to do yourself—modest, unassuming, fearless and untiring. We pledge to you . . . to build the Communist Party as a living instrument for your inflexible purpose—*the World of Tomorrow—Socialism in America.*"

American imperialism, which seeks again to drag the people of the United States into war for its own aggrandizement, hates and fears the Communist Party, which is dedicated to the struggle against capitalism and imperialist war. That is why the war-makers seek to suppress the Party that Ruthenberg founded. That is why they are persecuting the Communist Party and are determined to imprison its

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leader, Earl Browder—the outstanding leader and spokesman of America's anti-war forces.

We cannot better honor Ruthenberg's memory than by rallying the workers around the Party of Ruthenberg, Browder, and Foster for its democratic right to open existence and against the imprisonment and silencing of its leaders. We cannot do less in Ruthenberg's honor than to intensify the struggle against the drive of the war-makers and to double and triple our efforts to build the Party and spread its influence among the broadest masses of the people.

As we approach April 6, the twenty-third anniversary of the day on which "Kept-us-out-of-war" Woodrow Wilson took us into war, we must exert every effort to mobilize America's millions to demonstrate against a repetition of that infamous betrayal. Let Ruthenberg's words inspire us: "We are working towards this end, that out of the chaos of this war there may come a new society, a new world. . . ."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE RENAISSANCE OF NATIONALITIES AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF NATIONS IN THE U.S.S.R.*

BY M. CHEKALIN

IN HIS classical work *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question,* Comrade Stalin gave the following concise scientific definition of a nation:

"A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up, manifested in a community of culture." (Joseph Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, p. 8, International Publishers, New York.

Comrade Stalin emphasized that the presence of but one of these essentials does not constitute a national formation; furthermore, that the absence of even one of these essentials means that the people under consideration are not a nation. Only the composite of all the attributes indicated by Comrade Stalin go to make a nation.

Comrade Stalin further showed that the formation and development of the modern nations are connected with a definite historical period, the epoch of the disintegration of feudalism and the victory of capitalism.

In the storm and stress of national wars and bourgeois revolutions, the medieval feudal principalities collapsed and the non-integrated nationalities began to evolve into nations. These struggles engendered and invigorated a patriotic national ideology, a national language and literature. There arose national states.

The basis for these national movements was the development of the productive forces and the striving for a unified national market, essential for developing capitalism. The victory of capitalist relationships created the conditions for the formation of nations.

Thus, the nation is a historical category. It is a product of the decomposition of feudalism and of the victory of the capitalist mode of production. The nation was already conceived in the womb of feudal society, but it is not typical of the epoch of feudalism. The nation is a product of the bourgeois epoch of social development.

* * *

If, with Stalin's definition of a nation as criterion, we examine the

* Translated for *The Communist* from *Pod Znamieniem Marxizma* (*Under the Banner of Marxism*), 1939, No. 10. Abridged text.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mode of life of certain peoples on the borders of former tsarist Russia, it becomes absolutely clear that prior to the victory of the great October Socialist Revolution, many of these peoples were not crystallized into nations.

The policy of the Russian military-feudal imperialism aimed at strangling the culture of the oppressed peoples, at their enforced Russification, at preventing their development into distinct nations. A backward primitive economy, nomadic and semi-nomadic types of existence, vestiges of a tribal mode of life—this was the condition of the Tadjik, Turkoman, Kazak and Kirghiz peoples on the eve of the Socialist Revolution. It is clear that under such conditions they could not consolidate into distinct nations. The same must be said of the numerous other nationalities of tsarist Russia, the Udmurtians, Kalmuks, Komis, Chuvashes, Yakutians, etc., which were doomed under those conditions to extinction.

The German social-chauvinist Karl Kautsky asserted that a majority of the peoples of Russia, particularly the Ossets, Vogulis, Maris and Kalmuks, would never develop into distinct nations, but would be assimilated by other peoples.

The Socialist Revolution, having overthrown the power of landlords and capitalists and placed the proletariat in power, finally broke the fetters of social slavery and national oppression. The Revolution converted the former colonial border regions into independent and free Soviet Republics. It established the relations between the Russian people and the other peoples of the land "on the humane principle of equality, and not the serf principles of privileges, that humiliate a great nation." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, p. 101.) The proletariat in power discarded the ferocious national policy of the landlords and capitalists and inaugurated a new, Bolshevist policy —a policy of friendship and brotherhood of peoples.

The Soviet state made it possible for previously backward peoples and tribes, with the assistance of the victorious proletariat of Russia, to pass on to socialism by omitting the capitalist stage of development, and on this basis to develop for the first time into independent nations.

The most important prerequisite for the consolidation of diffused nationalities into integrated nations was the realization of Soviet regional autonomy—the creation of autonomous republics and regions.

Proponents of the chauvinist conception of a "Great State," opponents of the liberation of oppressed nationalities—the Trotskyites and Bukharinites—opposed the formation of national republics and regions and the consolidation of backward peoples into independent nations. They cynically contended that many peoples were at a very low level of culture, that they would be unable to take advantage of their autonomy, that such national consolidation would bring dissension.

The Party, led by Lenin and Stalin, mercilessly exposed and defeated these machinations of the enemy. Lenin and Stalin emphasized repeatedly that the working class took power precisely in order to secure for all the peoples of Russia

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

true freedom; to secure for them the possibility of building their own autonomous Soviet republics and regions, and of developing into independent nations—the only sure road to true brotherhood and friendship of the peoples.

The Consolidation of the Turkmenian Nation

The bourgeois nationalist elements strove to direct the process of consolidating the nationalities, in order to convert national autonomy into a means for the oppression of the toilers of the given nationality.

Thus, the Pan-Islamists and Pan-Turkists opposed the consolidation of the various Turkic nationalities into distinct nations. They denied the necessity of consolidating the Uzbeks, Tadjiks, Turkomans, Kirghiz and Kazaks into distinct nations, counterposing to this the idea of a single Turkic nation.

Seeking to undermine the consolidation of these nations, the Pan-Turkists characterized the aspiration to national consolidation as a manifestation of national dissension, to eliminate which, they contended, it was essential for all these nationalities to merge into one Turkic nation.

Under the pretext of combating national dissension, the Pan-Turkists defended the interests of the dominant sections among the Mussulman nationalities—the Uzbek and Tartar bourgeoisie, which strove to arrest the process of national self-determination of such weaker peoples as the Kazaks, Kirghiz, Bashkirs and Tadjiks, and to prevent the development of the class struggle within these nationalities.

Comrade Stalin exposed the aims both of the Trotskyites and the Bukharinites, expressive of Great-State chauvinism, and those of the various regional bourgeois nationalist elements, and demonstrated that the Soviet Government would help consolidate the formerly backward and non-integrated peoples into distinct nations, and that the process of consolidation would proceed under the leadership of the working class.

In his speech, "The Political Tasks of the University of the Peoples of the East" (Joseph Stalin, *Cited Work*, pp. 206-220), on May 18, 1925, Comrade Stalin indicated that one of the basic distinctions of the development and existence of the Soviet Republics of the East, in contradistinction to colonial and dependent countries, is that "they are developing and consolidating themselves as nations, not under the aegis of the bourgeois regime, but under the aegis of Soviet Government. This is a fact without precedent in history, but it is a fact." (*Ibid.*, p. 207.)

A striking example of the consolidation of a nation under the auspices of the dictatorship of the working class is the history of the development of the Turkmenian people.

In Turkmenistan there are about 1,400,000 inhabitants, of whom 72 per cent are Turkomans. Before the Revolution the Turkomans lived in the territory of the former Trans-Caspian region, as well as in the territories of Khiva and Bokhara. The Turkomans were conquered by

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tsarism in the 'eighties of the last century. They were then divided into separate Turkmenian tribes—the Tekintzi, Sariki-Suliri, Djafarbai, Akatbai, and others. Among these clans and tribes there went on for decades sanguinary warfare, which was fostered by the clan chiefs.

The basis of social life was the clan, headed by an exploiting group which was rapidly developing into feudal lords. Vestiges of a clan society remained among the Turkomans up to the time of the national delimitation of Turkmenistan in 1924 and the introduction of the land and irrigation reform in 1926.

Each county was populated by a clan that had settled down; each village by a gens. Such clan organization was clearly reflected in the system of land and irrigation relationships in the so-called land commune—*sanashik*—under the rules of which the right to land and water was possessed only by men who were married. A poor man, unable to pay the purchase price for a wife, remained landless, an eternal slave of the bey.

After the subjugation of Turkmenia, its toiling masses suffered double oppression. The extortionist policy of the Russian landlords, capitalists and bureaucrats was aggravated by the oppression on the part of the local patriarchal-feudal elements. The policy of the tsarist government was constantly directed towards fomenting inter-clan strife.

As a result of the ferocious exploitation of the Russian military-feudal imperialism and of local feudal beys and usurers, the toiling dekhans were gradually dispossessed of land, water and cattle. By the time of the Socialist Revolution, a considerable part of the land and cattle found its way into the hands of beys and usurers. The Revolution found the Turkomans as disunited as they had been at the start of the Russian conquest; it found the same feudal-clan system, tribal and clan enmity, and barbarism.

Artificially sundered between Russian Turkestan and Bokhara, the Turkomans had no territory of their own and possessed neither common language nor common culture. In essence, there did not exist a united Turkoman people; there existed a large number of kindred clans and tribes having distinct peculiarities in language, mode of life, etc.

The national delimitation of Turkestan, effected in 1924, signified that the parts of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan which had been artificially sundered under Russian imperialism were reunited, forming independent national states and thus accelerating the unification of the toiling masses of these countries and the completion of their national consolidation. In the national delimitation there was manifested the deep urge of the Turkomans and other peoples for national consolidation; the urge to have their own organs of power that would be close and familiar to them; the urge to develop a culture, national in form and socialist in content. This national delimitation created the basis for accelerated crystallization of a Turkmenian nation on the basis of the Soviet order; it gave the Turkomans the primary requisite of a nation—their own territory.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The national delimitation of Turkestan clarified the national relationships in Central Asia, hastened the process of class differentiation and the development of class consciousness among the toilers, strengthened the struggle of the dekhans against the beys, creating the conditions for the development of the economic life on the basis of its transition to socialist forms of economy.

The land and irrigation reform effected in 1926 had tremendous significance for the peoples of Central Asia. It definitely eliminated the clan land commune and with it the power of clan chieftains and the clan distribution of water, changing the Turkmenian village from a clan subdivision into an economic and administrative unit.

In Turkmenistan, 32,000 landless and almost landless households were provided with land and water through the abolition of the feudal tenures. This reform created the prerequisites for drawing the masses of dekhans into cooperatives and collective farms. The great help of the Union Government during the fifteen years of the existence of the Turkmenian Soviet Republic has made possible tremendous agricultural achievements. During the two Stalinist Five-Year Plans alone, investments in Turkmenian agriculture totaled 391,800,000 rubles. On the eve of the Socialist Revolution there were only 64 plows in the basic regions of old Turkmenia. At present there are in Soviet Turkmenia over 4,000 tractors, approximately 200 combines and thousands of the most complicated agricultural machines. Dozens of machine and tractor stations have been established. Collective farms comprise 95.4 per cent of dekhan households and there are about forty large state farms.

The important problem of irrigation, on which depends the development of Turkmenian agriculture, is now being solved successfully. Large irrigation constructions have been completed, and the total arable acreage has markedly increased. The gross cotton crop has increased three times as compared to the pre-War level. Cattle breeding is developing rapidly. From 1936 to 1938 the number of heads of cattle increased by 63 per cent, reaching 2,344,000 heads. During the last three years the income of the collective farms of the republic grew from 63,000,000 rubles to 420,000,000 rubles.

Comrade Stalin has often stressed the primary importance of developing industry in the erstwhile oppressed border regions in order to end their economic and cultural backwardness. In Turkmenia, along with the advance in agriculture, industry is developing at a rapid rate. New industries fostered here include raw silk production and silk weaving (with three raw silk and two silk weaving plants). A sulphur plant has been built in Kara-Kum. Other new plants include the largest cotton factory in the U.S.S.R., a wool-washing mill, a flour mill with an elevator, a candy factory, a number of canning plants, a large window glass factory, a large general printing plant, a meat-packing plant and a fish-packing plant. The construction of a gigantic chemical combine at

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kara Bughas is being completed. The oil industry based on the Nebitdag oil field is growing. As a result, industrial production in Turkmenia in 1936 was seven times that of 1913. Agrarian Turkmenia has become an industrial-agrarian country. In 1937, industrial production formed nearly 66 per cent of the total production of the Republic.

This industrial development brought a marked increase in the ranks of the Turkmenian working class. While in 1925 there were 44,500 workers and employees in Turkmenia, by 1934 there were 103,500, including 13,700 Turkomans, and in 1936 the number of workers and employees rose to 136,000. In 1924 there were only 72 women working in large enterprises; in 1936 the number reached 31 per cent of the total number of workers.

As a result of all this, the process of national consolidation embraced the entire country.

At the time of the national delimitation of Turkestan, there was as yet in reality no common literary language in Turkmenia. There existed many tribal dialects.

In the struggle for the creation of a common Turkmenian language, the Bolshevik Party firmly pursued the policy of developing and improving the spoken language of the Turkmenian masses, rejecting the nationalist tendency in favor of one Turkic language. In 1928 the first Russian-Turkmenian dictionary of 20,000 words was published. Now the literary Turkmenian language is being successfully developed and rooted in the national literature. While during the fifty years of colonial domination by tsarist Russia not a single literary work appeared in Turkmenia, now members of the writers' union of Soviet Turkmenistan have produced quite a number of literary works. At present there are in Turkmenia 1,377 primary and secondary schools, 38 factory and technical schools and four institutions of higher learning. The total number of students has grown from 7,000 in 1914 to 233,000 in 1939. Since the inaccessible Arabic alphabet has been replaced first by the Latin and now by the Russian alphabet, the toiling masses of Turkmenia now have the opportunity of mastering all the accumulated knowledge of mankind. The Republic also has now its national theater. There are in Turkmenia five state-owned theaters, six theaters owned by collective and state farms, 22 moving picture theaters, and 606 clubs and traveling libraries.

There are 36 newspapers published in the Turkmenian language. Of the total budgetary appropriations of the Republic and localities, 40 per cent is devoted to cultural needs. Turkmenia, once backward, has now become a flourishing Socialist Republic within the great Soviet Union.

Thus, in the Soviet period there has been formed an independent Turkmenian nation. This nation has acquired a common territory; a common economy based on a unified socialist system of production; a new Turkmenian culture, national in form and socialist in content; and a common Turkmenian language, familiar and understandable to the broad masses regardless of regional or tribal distinctions.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Literature, the theater, art, imbued with socialist content, are raising a once backward people to a high level of development, educating the masses in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, thus contributing to the further strengthening of the multi-national Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Rebirth of the Tadjik Nation

The process of national consolidation under Soviet power is characteristic of many national groups, particularly those inhabiting the border regions of the U.S.S.R. What has been stated in regard to Turkmenistan is fully applicable to Tadjikistan, which, prior to the Revolution, was as backward as Turkmenistan.

The territory of present-day Tadjikistan was formed of the eastern part of the former Khanate of Bokhara and of the mountainous part of Russian Turkestan.

The Tadjiks are a people with a very rich historical and cultural past. One thousand years ago they had a rich literature. In their language wrote Firdusi; Saadi, the famous poet of the thirteenth century; and the great scientist, encyclopedist and poet of the tenth century, Avicenna.

Subjected to double oppression, on the one hand by the Emir of Bokhara and his officials and beys, and, on the other hand, by the Russian military-feudal imperialism, the disunited tribes of Tadjiks were degraded to the level of most backward nationalities. Literacy among the population of Tadjikistan scarcely reached one-half or three-quarters of one per cent, limited as it was to the mullahs and officials.

The October Revolution liberated the Tadjik toilers from colonial oppression, and in 1920 a revolt of the toilers, assisted by the Red Army, ended the power of the Emir of Bokhara. Bokhara became a Soviet People's Republic. In 1924, with the national delimitation of Turkestan, the Tadjiks received a united territory, forming the autonomous Tadjik Republic within Uzbekistan. In 1929, Tadjikistan was reconstituted into a Soviet Socialist Republic, affiliated directly with the U.S.S.R.

Guided by the Bolshevik Party, the toilers of Tadjikistan smashed the enemies of the people, the bourgeois-nationalists, and have achieved remarkable progress.

Instead of the several small semi-handicraft shops that existed in the past, Tadjikistan now has large-scale industry, including a machine factory, a number of canning plants, several silk-weaving factories, a sewing plant, a silk combine in Hodgent, and nine large, technically well-equipped cotton-cleaning factories. Production in 1938 was 195 times that of 1913; the number of workers rose from 204 in 1913 to 23,000 in 1939.

Under Soviet power, 140 kilometers of railroads were built in Tadjikistan. To indicate the tremendous changes that have taken place in the economy of Tadjikistan in the last few years, it will suffice to cite a few figures on the great irrigation system in process of construction: the volume of excavation work—26,000,000 cubic meters; the total length of the irrigation net-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

work—13,000 kilometers; engineering constructions—10,000 units.

This network will assure irrigation to tens of thousands of hectares of land, to be used for cultivation of high-grade Egyptian cotton. In 1914, irrigated land in Tadjikistan amounted to 173,000 hectares,* and in 1937, to 242,000.

Agriculture in Tadjikistan has been converted into large-scale mechanized collective agriculture. Of the dekhan households, 97 per cent are in the collectives. On the collective fields there now operate more than three thousand tractors, and thousands of combines and complex thrashing machines.

In cultural development, the achievements of Tadjikistan are outstanding. In 1914 there were only 400 pupils in Tadjikistan; by 1939 the number reached 328,000, or increased 820 times.

In 1938 the literate population exceeded 70 per cent of the total. Forty-two newspapers were published in the Tadjik language in 1937. In the decade 1924 to 1934, budgetary expenditures for education rose from 170,000 rubles to 53,472,000 rubles, *i.e.*, 314 times. A Tadjik intelligentsia has developed. In 1914, for all of Tadjikistan, there were only thirteen physicians; by 1938 the number had grown to 440. The number of teachers alone has reached 10,414.

There are at present in Tadjikistan two teachers' colleges, a medical school, an institute for gardening and fruit growing, an agricultural institute, and 29 technical secondary schools. There has been created a State Tadjik national theater. A national Tadjik literature is developing. Tadjik culture, national in form and socialist in content, is developing vigorously.

On the foundation of socialist construction, the erstwhile disconnected Tadjik tribes have merged into an independent nation. In the old dictionaries, the word "Tadjik" was defined as "the name of a once extant tribe." Now the Tadjiks are not only in existence, but constitute a politically organized, independent people, offering an example of powerful economic and cultural progress.

In 1925, in greeting the Communists of Tadjikistan, Comrade Stalin, pointing out that the Tadjiks have had a rich history, that their organizational and political abilities of the past were known to all, wrote as follows:

"Workers of Tadjikistan! Lift the culture of your country, develop her economy, assist the toilers of town and village, rally the best sons of the Fatherland and demonstrate to the entire East that you are the most worthy descendants of your ancestors, that you are holding firmly in your hands the banner of liberation."

Under the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of Comrade Stalin personally, the Bolsheviks and all the toilers of Tadjikistan have converted their young country into an exemplary socialist Soviet Republic, into a steel outpost of the Soviet Union on the border of the enslaved colonial East, pointing out to all the op-

* A hectare=2.471 acres—*The Editor.*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pressed peoples of the East the road to their liberation from the imperialist yoke.

The National Rehabilitation of the Gypsies

Let us consider further that most backward and hapless people under capitalism—the Gypsies. The language of the Gypsies has a considerable similarity with the ancient Hindu language, Sanskrit, and is also quite close to Hindi, the most widespread language in modern India. This justifies the assumption that the Gypsies at one time came from India. The Gypsies appeared in Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and on the territory of the U.S.S.R. in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The oppression of the Gypsies is, probably, the most savage, the most bloody in the history of all peoples. Loathed and hounded by all kinds of religious and bourgeois cliques, they were oppressed in every possible fashion in capitalist countries and even subjected to extermination. In Western Europe they were victims of persistent persecution, of exile to desert islands, of death penalties in every form.

In tsarist Russia the Gypsies, primarily a nomadic people, were under special police surveillance as criminals. In accordance with special regulations of the tsarist government, Gypsies were excluded from all populous centers, especially from cities. Gypsies were forced into special battalions, used for particularly hard labor. Whole camps of Gypsies were subjected to the vilest persecutions on charges of witchcraft, thievery and cannibalism.

Condemned to dire ignorance, poverty and filth, the Gypsies wandered through the endless open spaces of tsarist Russia, seeking the longed-for "Gypsy good fortune." Born to squalor in dirty, ragged tents, they grew up only to drag out an existence of endless privation and suffering. And the "good fortune" was not in sight.

This was their condition prior to the October Socialist Revolution. Only the great Socialist Revolution placed in the hands of the Gypsies the key to happiness. It opened to them the doors of factories and workshops, of collective farms, and schools; it opened to them the opportunity of honest, productive labor; it thus opened to them the road to national renascence.

Despite the complex arrangements required to introduce the Gypsies to steady productive labor, considerable progress has already been achieved in their economic and cultural development. Out of the eighty thousand Gypsies inhabiting the U.S.S.R., over one-half have already been transferred to a settled mode of life. Scores of Gypsy collective farms have been organized in various regions of the Union, comprising thousands of Gypsy families. Thousands of Gypsies are engaged in industry, and in producers' cooperatives. There are Gypsy Stakhanovites. There are Gypsy skilled workers, technicians and engineers. There are quite a number of Gypsies who have qualified as Party and Young Communist League functionaries. Gypsy schools established by January 1, 1936, in-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cluded one pedagogical school, one junior high school, and twenty-five primary schools. In Moscow there is a Gypsy club. The Gypsy nationality, very gifted and musical, could not under the conditions of tsardom unfold its great artistic abilities. The Soviet Government has provided the opportunity to the Gypsies to develop their talents. Moscow has the only Gypsy state theater in the world, "The Romain."

Alfonse Goldsmidt, prominent French cultural figure, gave a glowing account of the first performance at the "Romain," which he attended while visiting Moscow.

"The excellent Gypsy Theatre in Moscow," he wrote in 1937, "distinctive, mercurial, colorful, and vital, serves as evidence of the effectual and just national policy of the U.S.S.R. Endowed with high artistry, singularly effective, many-sided and monolithic in its expressiveness and purposefulness, the Moscow Gypsy Theater has aroused in me the desire to present this great achievement to the bourgeois world as well. Let the Theater appear in Paris, Berlin and London. Let it demonstrate what real art can do for a liberated people."

In 1926, for the first time in the history of this people, a Gypsy alphabet was created in the U.S.S.R. Since then there have appeared in the Gypsy language literary works, textbooks and other publications. From among the Gypsy youth there are now coming forward writers, poets and artists. A Gypsy national culture, socialist in content, is developing. Thus the bourgeois and philistine prattle that Gypsies are unfit for toil or civilized life has been completely disproved.

The Gypsies thus offer another example demonstrating that the Socialist Revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat bring new life to all nationalities, even the most down-trodden and backward, and draw them into the fraternal union of free peoples that are building the socialist society.

What is the ultimate fate of the Gypsy nationality in the U.S.S.R.? Will it develop into a distinct nation or will it be assimilated by other peoples? This depends on a number of circumstances. The Gypsies are not in possession of a common territory. They are scattered through the territory of the U.S.S.R. in small groups.

According to the census of 1926, the number of Gypsies in our country has increased since 1897 by 88.8 per cent, but the increase of those speaking the Gypsy language was only 22.9 per cent. This indicates that the Gypsies adopt the languages of those nationalities among whom they live, and gradually forget their own language. The aloofness and clannishness of the Gypsies are steadily disappearing. As they are drawn into activities on collective farms and in industry, they come into closer relations with other peoples. Lately young Gypsies in quite a number of cases have rejected Gypsy schools in favor of Russian schools, preferring to study in the Russian language.

It is therefore probable that the majority of Gypsies will be assimilated. In his speech to the students

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the School for Toilers of the East, Comrade Stalin said:

"Undoubtedly, certain nationalities may, and even certainly will, undergo a process of assimilation. Such processes have occurred before. But the point is that the process of assimilation of certain nationalities does not preclude, but rather presupposes, the opposite process of reinforcement and development of a number of powerful nationalities, for the partial process of assimilation is a result of the general process of development of nationalities." (Joseph Stalin, *Cited Work*, p. 211.)

The Rejuvenation of the Northern Peoples

Let us turn, by way of further example, to the position of the peoples of the Soviet North, who were among the most hapless and downtrodden under the tsarist autocracy.

The small nationalities of the North occupy 47 per cent of the territory of the Soviet Union. Scattered over this vast land, living in its forests, tundras, and taigas, are twenty-five nationalities and tribes, but with a total population of only 160,000.

The Evenks (Tunguses), numbering about 40,000 persons, are the most numerous of these Northern nationalities. The Evenks are a sociable and very capable people with pronounced artistic propensities. Even in the old days they were therefore known as the "Frenchmen of Siberia." But these "Frenchmen" were nevertheless subjected to the same oppression as the other peoples of the North. The more easily to rob the Northern peoples, as was its policy with all other nationalities, the tsarist government invariably kept them in darkness and ignorance.

Thus, in the Turukhan area, now the national region of the Evenks, the annual appropriation of the tsarist government included: 5,619 rubles for local administration; 2,729 rubles for the upkeep of the clergy, and—87 rubles for education! As a result of this policy, prior to the victory of the Socialist Revolution, not one of the Northern nationalities had its own script, and illiteracy was universal. Fantastic stories were even current in which the Northern nationalities were called "Samoyedi"—"self-eaters" (cannibals).

Only under Soviet Power have the nationalities of the North received the opportunity of free and equal development together with the other peoples of the Soviet Union. From among their midst, groups of active workers have arisen who now provide leadership in the national districts and regions, the initial form of autonomy of these nationalities. In 1935-36 the peoples of the North had 466 schools and five teachers' colleges. There are also special subdivisions at their disposal in technical schools, as well as the facilities of the Institute of the Peoples of the North, located in Leningrad. A history of misery and oppression has thus become a realization of cultural and economic efflorescence.

Far-off Chukotka includes the Chukotsk national region. Let us consider one of its typical districts, the Chaun district. In 1933 there

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was not one literate person among the adult Chukchi. Vestiges of barbarism and patriarchal modes of life had persisted tenaciously. The entire native population lived in nomadic huts. Polygamy and group marriage persisted even among the youth. These conditions were fostered by the shamans. In the short six years that have elapsed, Soviets of representatives of the native population have been established; producers' associations have been formed. So rapid has this development been that by 1937 this district had eleven schools, seven radio stations, a moving picture theater, a hospital, a dispensary, and three medical stations. The toiling population now has at its disposal tractors and tugboats. Instead of the nomadic huts, modern European cottages have appeared, and in five settlements these cottages are equipped with electricity. Similar progress has been achieved in the other national regions and districts.

In the northern part of the Omsk Province is the Ostyak-Vogulsk national region, inhabited by two nationalities: the Khanti and the Mansi. This is a region of 610,000 square kilometers, exceeding the combined territories of France and Germany; but its population is only 90,000. The region has existed for seven years as a national unit.

In the spring of 1937 the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. approved the decision of the Council of Nationalities to introduce a new alphabet for the Khanti and Mansi peoples. In conformity with the desire of these peoples the alphabet consists of Russian characters. In 1937 this region had 173 grammar and high schools with 13,000 pupils, and two special junior colleges, one pedagogical, the other medical. Previously the Khanti and Mansi knew nothing of agriculture. In 1936 they had 10,000 hectares under grain cultivation and were served by two machine and tractor stations. By 1937 the collective farms comprised 67 per cent of the total number of households.

This region is now being served by a network of 91 medical institutions, while under the tsar medical practice was confined here to one lone feldsher who spent more time in drinking than in treating patients.

Owing to the successful application of the Leninist-Stalinist policy on nationalities these people are experiencing a renascence. Whereas, formerly, the population was steadily decreasing, there is now a high rate of increase—in the four years from 1933 to 1937 the Khanti and Mansi increased by 10 per cent.

In the Khabarovsk province there is the national Nanaisk region. In the past doomed to extinction, this people has attained, under Soviet Power, a new and happier life. There are in this region eleven collective farms and fourteen village Soviets comprising Nanaitsi and managed by them.

In the past the Nanaitsi were a nomadic people. They did not engage in agriculture and were altogether unacquainted with vegetables or even with potatoes. Now they are raising both grain and vegetables. Previously the Nanaitsi did not know of milk; they had never even seen a cow. Now every collective farm has dairy products for

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sale. In the village Naichino there is a prosperous fisherman's collective, "The New Path." In 1938 its cash income reached 1,150,000 rubles and the net profit 226,000 rubles. The collective was able to put 136,000 rubles into the reserve fund. Naichino has already built one house with twelve apartments, a steam bathhouse, a creche, a vegetable storehouse, and a workshop for fishermen's nets. This year a large club house is in construction.

The collective farm, "Nanaisk-Partisan," comprising 252 households, has receiving and transmitting radio equipment. Its members have built a clubhouse costing 28,000 rubles and have a large library. "Nanaisk-Partisan" has a maternity ward and two steam bath-houses. It has a power plant. Its seven-year grammar school is attended by 300 children. Formerly there were very few literate people among the Nanaitsi. Now all the Nanaisk children of school age attend school. The region possesses 31 grammar schools, seven junior high schools, one high school, 21 reading rooms, three libraries and 12 traveling libraries.

In recent years there have been built three hospitals and seventeen medical stations with maternity beds. (Before the Revolution there was only one feldsher for the entire Nanaisk region.)

* * *

Peoples who were backward in the past owe their rebirth to the Leninist-Stalinist policy on nationalities, to the fatherly care of Comrade Stalin. These examples reveal that in the Soviet Union, on the basis of the dictatorship of the working class, there is in process a magnificent renascence of numerous nationalities, the rise of the economic power and national cultures of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. Blasted are the spurious theories of "superior" and "inferior" races, of the inability of peoples formerly oppressed and backward to develop into independent nations and to create their own statehood.

A consolidation of nations, unheard of in history, is successfully being accomplished, not under a bourgeois regime, but under the aegis of the dictatorship of the working class.

* * *

It is clear that the consolidation of nations proceeding in the U.S.S.R. differs in principle from national consolidation under capitalism. The consolidation of nations in the epoch of rising capitalism proceeded under the leadership of the bourgeoisie and on the basis of the bourgeois social order.

The consolidation of nations in the U.S.S.R. proceeds under the leadership of the working class, on the basis of the Soviet socialist order.

The merging of disunited nationalities in the capitalist epoch produced maximum possibilities for the development of capitalism and led to the enslavement of the toilers by their own national bourgeoisie.

Under Soviet Power the unification into independent nations of peoples heretofore backward and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disunited facilitates the drawing of their toiling masses into the political and economic work of socialist construction; it facilitates the realization of the tasks of socialist construction.

The bourgeoisie, exercising hegemony in the consolidation of nations during the transition from feudalism to capitalism, sought to indoctrinate the masses with nationalist-patriotic ideology and to deceive them with catchwords of "a united nation" and "national liberty." From the very beginning the bourgeoisie preached chauvinistic ideas of the superiority of its nation over others, and fostered national inequality, antagonism and oppression.

The working class, in assuming leadership of the process of consolidation of nations, educates the toiling masses in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, in the spirit of equality and brotherly cooperation of free peoples.

The dictatorship of the working class undermines the foundations of national strife, inequality and oppression. Internationalism is inherent in the very nature of Soviet Power. Soviet patriotism, a new kind of patriotism, is an expression of this internationalism; Soviet patriotism is international, manifesting itself in the fact that all the peoples of the Soviet Union, irrespective of nationality, be they Turkomans, Tadjiks, Ukrainians, Chuvashes, or Tartars, regard as their fatherland, not only their autonomous region or republic, but the entire multi-national Soviet Union, and are ready to defend it with their lives.

Under capitalism every nation, as Lenin said, consists of two distinct nations—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. There can be no national unity under capitalism because there is a bitter struggle between the classes forming the nation. The bourgeoisie strives to represent its class interests as the interests of the nation, but it invariably betrays the national interests whenever its own are at stake.

In the U.S.S.R. each nation is a unit; it is not split into classes with antagonistic interests, since there are no longer any exploiting classes, and society is composed of toilers of the city and countryside whose interests are identical.

In the U.S.S.R. each nationality has achieved genuine unity. Reared in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, all nations, national groups and nationalities of the U.S.S.R. are unified politically and morally. They are united by the spirit of Soviet patriotism.

In unrelenting struggle against deviations in regard to the national question, against Great-Russian chauvinism and sectional nationalism, the Bolshevik Party has helped and will continue to help in the rejuvenation of the formerly backward nationalities and their consolidation into independent nations. The Party regards this process as a historically necessary step on the road towards complete abolition of the last remnants of inequality among the peoples of the U.S.S.R., which will create the conditions necessary for the complete fusion of nations in the world Communist society.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Socialism Assures Liberty of Nations

The victory of the Leninist-Stalinist policy on nationalities, the realization, under the dictatorship of the working class, of the historically unprecedented consolidation into distinct nations of hitherto disunited and backward peoples; the unexampled blossoming of national cultures, socialist in content, and, finally, the unbreakable friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.—these achievements are of world-wide historic significance.

Shattered are the "predictions" of the renegade Kautsky, that the majority of nationalities in the Soviet Union would not develop into nations, but would dissolve among other peoples. Life has demonstrated that all peoples and tribes in the U.S.S.R., even those formerly most backward and resigned, have come back to life under the Soviet power and are now flourishing under the Stalinist Constitution.

The practice of socialist construction has left not a single stone intact of the "theory" that alleged the innate incapacity of backward peoples for cultural development and statehood.

The Bolsheviks, faithful to the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, have always asserted that the backwardness of this or that people was not a consequence of their inherent racial peculiarities, but was a product of the historical environment in which this people existed. The backwardness of colonial peoples, said the Bolsheviks, was the result of the imperialist policy of the so-called great powers, which condemn these peoples to perpetual backwardness.

The example of the Soviet Union demonstrates conclusively that, once freed of the colonial yoke, and with substantial help extended by the more developed Russian working class, even those peoples formerly most backward are now catching up with the more advanced peoples in all fields of social and political life and cultural endeavor.

"It was formerly the 'accepted idea' that the world has been divided from time immemorial into inferior and superior races, into black peoples and white peoples, the former of which are unfit for civilization and are doomed to be objects of exploitation, while the latter are the sole vehicles of civilization, whose mission it is to exploit the former. This legend must now be regarded as shattered and discarded. One of the most important results of the October Revolution is that it dealt this legend a mortal blow, by showing in practice that the liberated non-European nations, once having been drawn into the channel of Soviet development, are no less capable than the European nations of promoting a *truly* progressive culture and a *truly* progressive civilization." (J. V. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, p. 254.)

The solidity and permanence of the achievements of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. in their national rehabilitation and development are based first of all on the victory of socialist construction in all the republics of the Soviet Union.

In his report to the Twelfth Congress of the Communist Party of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Soviet Union on the nationality question Comrade Stalin pointed out that: "the whole East regards our Union of Republics as an experimental station." If we solve the nationality question correctly, if we are able to establish truly fraternal collaboration of peoples, then the entire East will see in our country the advance guard, in whose footsteps it must follow. ". . . and that," said Comrade Stalin, "will be the beginning of the collapse of world imperialism." (*Ibid.*, p. 148.)

The experiment of solving the nationality question on the basis of socialism through creating national state formations (autonomous regions and republics), the best form of fraternal collaboration among peoples, has proved a complete success. The Soviet Union represents an example of a world of nations, never witnessed under capitalism and inconceivable under the dominance of the bourgeoisie.

"It was formerly the 'accepted idea' that the only method of liberating the oppressed nations was that *of bourgeois nationalism,* the method of separating nations from each other, the method of disuniting them, the method of accentuating national animosity between the toiling masses of the various nations. This legend must now be regarded as disproved. One of the most important results of the October Revolution is that it has dealt this legend a mortal blow, by demonstrating in practice the possibility and expediency of the *proletarian, international* method of liberating oppressed nations, as being the only correct method, by demonstrating in practice the possibility and expediency of a *fraternal alliance* between the workers and peasants of the most diverse nations based on the principles of *voluntary consent* and *internationalism.* The existence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which is the prototype of the future amalgamation of the toilers of all countries into a single world economic system, is but a direct proof of this." (*Ibid.*, p. 254.)

The experiment of forming a multi-national state on the basis of socialism has proved a complete success. The multi-national Soviet state has weathered all the trials and is the most solid state in the world. The peoples inhabiting it, liberated forever from the chains of capitalist slavery and national oppression, are united in unbreakable friendship and fraternal solidarity. This is attested by the latest mighty patriotic wave, which swept the entire country in the historic days when the Red Army crossed the western border in order to extend its protection to the life and property of the population of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia. The entire country reacted as one man to the speech of Comrade Molotov, demonstrating the unity of the people, the government and the Red Army.

In the camp of capitalism we find an entirely different picture. Again and again life substantiates the penetrating words of Comrade Stalin, that national enmity and national clashes are inevitable and unavoidable as long as capital is in power, and, conversely, peace between nations and national liberty can be regarded as assured, if the dictatorship of the proletariat is assured.

In the course of scores of years

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the bourgeoisie has made attempts to solve the nationality question on the basis of strengthening the power of capital. But all attempts to co-ordinate the development of nationalities with the system of exploitation of man by man proved sterile, they were doomed to failure.

Only twenty years ago, in the conflagration of the first world imperialist war, the Austro-Hungarian "patch-work" empire fell to pieces. The oppressed minorities—Czechs, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Croats, Serbs and others—did not choose to remain within a "united" Austro-Hungarian state. The experiment of forming a multi-national state on the basis of capitalism failed.

This is quite understandable, since the fundamental reason for national animosity in the multi-national bourgeois states is rooted in capitalism itself. The initiators of the intra-national dissension and strife are the exploiters, the capitalists, kulaks, landlords. It is precisely they who implant in the peoples the feeling of mutual distrust and foment nationalistic passions.

We are witnessing at present how the knot of national contradictions is becoming increasingly tangled up, threatening the very existence of capitalism. The multi-millioned masses of toilers, crushed under the burden of class and national oppression, do not want to bear this yoke any longer. With ever greater determination they are turning their eyes toward the great land of socialism, where peoples flourish under the Stalinist Constitution.

The most striking evidence of this are the recent events in Poland.

As a result of the Polish-German war, the complete inner bankruptcy of the Polish state was revealed. The multi-national Polish state fell to pieces as a house of cards in the course of an incredibly short time. The collapse of the Polish multi-national state furnishes added proof that the bourgeoisie was powerless to bring about the cooperation of peoples, it was completely bankrupt in the solution of the national question.

The Polish state arose in 1918-19. Into it were forcibly included the territories of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia, populated by Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians. Out of some thirty million of Poland's total population, eleven millions were Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians, and Jews numbered about three millions. National minorities thus formed over 40 per cent of the population of Poland.

What was the position of the Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians in Poland? The Polish bourgeoisie and landlords not only did not grant them even administrative autonomy, but they deprived them of most elementary rights. The national policy of the ruling classes of Poland recreated the most repulsive features of the policy of Russian tsardom. The Polish capitalists and landowners converted Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia into their internal colony, and the Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians into colonial slaves.

At the time when the peoples of Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Byelo-Russia were experiencing a great economic advance and a mighty rise of culture, national in form and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

socialist in content, the peoples of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia, handed over for pillage to the Polish gentry, were doomed to cultural decay.

Polish administrators took away the land from the Ukrainian and Byelo-Russian peasants and handed it over to Polish military colonists. The entire state apparatus in Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia was in the hands of the Poles. People of non-Polish nationality had no access to government positions. The use of the native language was subject to persecution in all state institutions. The Polish language dominated. Ukrainian and Byelo-Russian schools were closed.

The Polish ruling groups prosecuted a policy of forcible Polonization of the Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians. The Polish rulers cynically boasted that "ten years hence one will not find a single Byelo-Russian even with a candle."

Gross, shameless exploitation by the Polish landlords and kulaks, suppression and oppression, such was the lot of national minorities, particularly of the Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians, in gentry Poland.

The toiling masses of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia, inspired by the example of their brothers, living in the Soviet Union, waged an incessant struggle against their oppressors.

With fire and sword the Polish lords suppressed the slightest attempts to protest against the oppressive regime which they had instituted in Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia. But they did not succeed in breaking the determination of the Ukrainian and Byelo-Russian toilers to fight for their freedom.

These conditions constituted insurmountable difficulties to the task of developing internal unity and consolidation of forces of the multi-national Polish state. The war between Germany and Poland was the first serious test for the Polish state. This test it could not pass. From the first days of the war lack of internal unity of the multi-national Polish state became apparent. The national minorities, oppressed by the Polish gentry and deprived of national rights, did not and could not serve as a reliable bulwark for the Polish state. They had no desire to fight for its hateful and unjust regime. This determined the military weakness of the Polish state and its inglorious end.

In the course of some two weeks of war Poland lost all of its industrial districts as well as most of its large cities and cultural centers. The irresponsible rulers of Poland abandoned the population to its fate and fled to Rumania. All connections of the Polish general headquarters with the army were broken. The Polish state and the Polish government virtually ceased to exist.

Thus history itself once more demonstrated that national inequality, suppression and oppression inevitably engender centrifugal forces, which doom the state to extinction.

The collapse of the Polish state, and the anarchy and disorder which reigned in Poland, opened the way for all kinds of incidents which could have created a threat to the U.S.S.R. Under such circumstances, it is clear, the Soviet Government

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

could no longer remain neutral with regard to the situation that had arisen in Poland. Nor could it remain indifferent towards the fate of the kindred peoples of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia, abandoned by the Polish Government, and handed over to the mercy of the demoralized and infuriated horde of gentry officers.

The Government of the Soviet Union decided to extend a helping hand to its blood-brothers, the Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians.

The Soviet Government, declared Comrade Molotov in his broadcast to the Soviet people, had instructed the general headquarters of the Red Army to order the troops to cross the border and take under their protection the life and property of the population of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia.

The Red Army crossed the border in order to fulfil its international task—to liberate the Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians from the cruel oppression of the Polish gentry and together with that "to deliver the Polish people from the unfortunate war into which they were plunged by their stupid leaders, and to enable them to live in peace." (V. M. Molotov.)

The peoples of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia received the detachments of the Red Army with indescribable joy and jubilation.

The Red Army has accomplished its historic task. Millions of our brothers in Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia are for all time liberated from the lordly yoke. They have become masters of their own destiny. The peasants, Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians, received the land taken away from the landlords, and their children in the schools are beginning to receive instruction in their native tongues.

In the elections to the People's Assembly of Western Ukraine, carried out on the basis of the most democratic franchise, 4,433,997 voters out of a total electorate of 4,766,275, or 92.83 per cent cast their ballots. In the elections to the People's Assembly of Western Byelo-Russia, 2,672,280 voters out of a total electorate of 2,763,191, or 96.71 per cent, went to the polls.

The elections demonstrated a high degree of political interest, single mindedness and unity of will on the part of the population of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia, which gladly cast their votes for the candidates nominated by the people.

The People's Assemblies of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia, reflecting the irresistible will of the peoples of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia to belong to the friendly family of peoples of the U.S.S.R., petitioned the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. to merge Western Ukraine with the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Western Byelo-Russia with the Byelo-Russian Soviet Socialist Republic. The Extraordinary Fifth Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. approved this petition.

Henceforth the severance of the Byelo-Russian people is ended. The Ukrainian people are also reunited.

The liberation of the peoples of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia from the yoke of the Polish gentry and the creation of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conditions for their free development, for their economic and cultural growth, are an event of tremendous historical significance, singularly great in its revolutionizing effect. Millions of people the world over have been convinced by deed that the Soviet Union and its Red Army bring freedom, progress and culture to oppressed peoples.

The Leninist-Stalinist nationality policy is victoriously being fulfilled, bringing ever new victories. The eyes of oppressed peoples throughout the world turn towards the U.S.S.R. The mighty beacon of the Soviet land illuminates the road forward, towards freedom and happiness of all humanity.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOK REVIEW

DEPRESSION AS THE NORMAL STATE OF PRESENT-DAY CAPITALISM

DIVIDENDS TO PAY. By E. D. Kennedy. Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., New York, 1939, $2.50.

"FOR ten years the searing question in this country has been whether our economy has, in truth, ceased to grow"—this is how *Fortune* formulates the major problem of the American business and industrial system. Speaking of present-day American capitalism, the editors of *Fortune* characterize it as "an era of high savings and low investment." *

Dividends To Pay sets out to supply an empirical answer to this crucial question: why have we had no real recovery since the great crash of 1929? The author makes an original approach to the subject through a study of *corporate* income. He musters authentic statistics to show that even the prosperity of the 'twenties was rather thin, extending only to some thousand large corporations, but failing to reach the great bulk of American corporations, not to speak of the masses of the people. Although there are some 475,000 corporations in the United States, only "a few large companies have been monopolizing the *profits* of industry since even before the depression era." Further, during the years of crisis and depression of the 'thirties the great majority of the middle-sized and small corporations accumulated "appalling deficits in almost every year"; but the thousand or so "monopolistic companies at the top of the industrial heap have never as a unit lost a cent."

A careful review of the actual workings of the American corporate system, with its great concentration of capital and its price rigidities ("price umbrella"), leads Kennedy to the conclusion that this country is now "threatened with a permanent depression" (p. 42). Without attempting to go into fundamentals, *Dividends To Pay* seeks to supply an answer, not merely to the question as to whether we have entered into a state of permanent depression, but also to the question of the reasons for this stagnation.

The most remarkable thing about the book is that the answer supplied by the author is by and large not only empirically correct, but hits at the very root of the inherent contradictions of capitalism, the ultimate cause of its present stage of permanent depression. The book under review is perhaps the best proof that an honest and careful classification of facts, without attempts to distort or gloss them over,

* *Fortune*, February, 1940, p. 103.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is necessarily bound to arrive at conclusions conforming to the intrinsic laws governing the questions under consideration, as developed by Marx.

Before proceeding to review the wealth of factual information, carefully collected and analyzed by the author, as well as his generalizations, it would be helpful to refer briefly to the subject of crisis and recovery.

* * *

Judged by usual capitalist standards, 1939 could be classified as a period of rapid recovery. "Not since 1933," comments the *Wall Street Journal* (January 2, 1940), "has American history experienced so rapid and extensive an expansion of its activities as took place within the second half of 1939."

But somehow the recovery proved to be rather short-lived. Even the most orthodox bourgeois economists cannot ignore the two challenging questions repeatedly asked:

"Why is this upswing, like every other since 1929, stopping at a time when there are still millions of unemployed who want work, and when the only natural limit upon business, *i.e.*, the limit of capacity to produce is far from reached? After a rise in industrial operations has lifted production above consumption, why is it assumed, almost without question, that the balance must be re-established chiefly by curtailment of production instead of by a rise in consumption?" (*Bulletin of the National City Bank*, February, 1940.)

In an article dealing with unemployment, *Fortune* (February, 1940) admits:

"The American economic system, as is made clear throughout this issue, works better than any other in the world—for the 77 per cent who belong to it. This story is about the other 23 per cent—the unemployed, and their dependents. . . . The fact remains that they are dispossessed. The fact remains that from the standpoint of the economy they have no reason to be alive" (p. 94).

If that were all there was to it, if it were merely a question of 23 per cent of the population (according to *Fortune*, but in reality probably more than 33 per cent*) doomed by capitalism to a state of semi-starvation, an economic system that is based on dividends to pay would not devote so much space in its literature to the unemployed. As far as the bourgeois economist is concerned, the real trouble with this relative surplus of population is the fact that it exists side by side with surplus capital, that idle men and idle money condition one another. (Cf., Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 300.) From his own experience Colonel Ayres of the Cleveland Trust Co. puts it thus:

"Our problems are still those of huge taxation, idle men, idle dollars, and multiple buyers impeding the expansion of business enterprise." (*Bulletin of the Cleveland Trust Co.*, Feb. 15, 1940.)

To be sure, Colonel Ayres is en-

* *Cf.* President Roosevelt's unchallenged statement about a third of the nation being ill-fed, ill-clad, and ill-housed.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tirely in error in regard to huge taxation, since it "helps consume the greater part of the surplus-product instead of capitalizing it," thus relieving the pressure of idle capital. (*Capital*, Vol. III, p. 288.)

Surplus capital and relative surplus of population are so far conditioned by one another, that even from the point of view of the bourgeois economist, the question of the inability to continue the upswing though capacity production is far from reached; the question of the inability of the economic system to expand production though there are millions of unemployed available for exploitation—these remain the crucial economic problems.

* * *

Dividends To Pay makes a contribution to the discussion of the underlying conditions responsible for the stagnation of the capitalistic economic system. The author's conclusion as to the reason why the American economy has not been able to develop a genuine recovery, pursued to its logical end, may be summarized somewhat as follows: The economic system is based on production for profit and not for use; its underlying motive force is the drive for profits; the supreme commanding rule of all industrial activity is to manage so that there will be enough "dividends to pay"; and the effects of this system are aggravated in the extreme by the development of monopolies, leading to its decay. This answer, in the main, is scientifically correct. For the payment of dividends, profits, surplus value, is the concrete manifestation of the antagonism between socialized production and private appropriation. This antagonism is the ultimate cause of the cycles of crisis and recovery and, in the imperialist stage of capitalism, makes for the decay of the entire economic system.

As Lenin put it:

"Capitalism in its imperialist stage arrives at the threshold of the widest socialization of production. . . . Production becomes social, but appropriation remains private. The social means of production remain the private property of a few. The framework of formally recognized free competition remains, but the yoke of a few monopolists on the rest of the population becomes a hundred times heavier, more burdensome and intolerable." (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. V, p. 22. International Publishers, New York.)

In his empirical search for the basic causes of the decay of capitalism, Kennedy begins with an analysis of the various illusions or the false fronts of capitalism. Skillfully and with a preponderance of unchallengeable evidence, he disposes of a great many, perhaps of the major, common illusions so assiduously fostered by subservient bourgeois economics and the capitalist press.

* * *

We may start with the illusion that the problem of idle men and idle capital is only a recent phenomenon that has developed since the great crisis of 1929. The fact is that even in 1929 the number of unemployed exceeded two and a

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

half millions* and that American industry worked at no more than 70 per cent to 80 per cent of its capacity.** In addition, Kennedy shows that "the corporate prosperity of the 1920's was a very selective, almost an exclusive, prosperity. It belonged to relatively few high-profit corporations, and its major beneficiaries were relatively few rich men" (p. 2). He shows that the great monopolistic corporations for whom "we are all working, whether we know it or not" were not sharing prosperity with the other companies, but "were making money *at the expense* of the other companies" (p. 11).

Capitalist propaganda has made much of the so-called "popular ownership" of the great corporations. Editorial writers speak of the twenty million stockholders who own American business corporations. *Dividends To Pay* makes short shrift of this illusion. Quoting official figures, Kennedy proves that there are only some 351,000 stockholders receiving $1,000 a year or more in dividends, and that these stockholders receive jointly 72 per cent of the total dividends paid by all corporations. Moreover, a mere 1,084 stockholders, each receiving dividends of $250,000 a year and over, received in 1929 a total of $687,000,000 in dividends (practically 12 per cent of the total) indicating that they owned stocks to the value of seven to ten billion dollars. As to the other millions of so-called stockholders, they are merely the lambs that are shorn of their savings by Wall Street during every crash on the Stock Exchange. They range all the way from the holders of a few shares to certain more substantial stockholders. While the latter may have sunk their life savings in securities, they nevertheless hold such an infinitesimal part of the total stock of any substantial company that they have no more voice in it than the employee shareholder who is frequently discharged before he has even an opportunity to pay the final installments on the shares that were forced upon him during periods of so-called prosperity.

* * *

Dividends To Pay also disposes of the illusion that profits are essential in order to stimulate the spirit of enterprise, of business imagination, of venturesomeness; that society is compensated for the parasitism of monopoly capitalism by its greater productivity and inventiveness. In an excellent chapter on the decline of the corporate manager, Kennedy shows how complete in the typical American corporation today is the divorce between ownership and management. He shows that "the earnings of any large corporation are determined chiefly by industry conditions and not by the individual abilities of the company's operating head." By the history of several typical corporations he shows the transition from owner-management to banker-management—in Marxian terms, from the stage of industrial capitalism to the stage of finance capitalism. He

* *The Problem of Changing Population*, by National Resources Committee, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., p. 31.

** *American Capacity to Produce*, by Edward G. Bourse and Associates, Brookings Institution, 1934, p. 422.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

correctly concludes that "the large corporation of today is not the product of individual effort. . . . It is an example of concentrated and collectivized wealth."

It is one of the great merits of *Dividends To Pay* to be always specific. It discusses the great American corporations, the bulwarks of American capitalism, by name. Kennedy selects General Motors, an "exemplary" corporation, in order to show *"how few companies make how much* of the money, and how few their large stockholders are" (p. XVI).

* * *

Because of the excellent qualities of the book it is to be regretted that the author not only holds back from pursuing the subject to the end but at times falls into oversimplification and common errors without subjecting them to his usually critical analysis.

In his explanation of the process by which dividend payments bring about, first, periodic crises, and then, the menace of permanent stagnation, he follows the rather oversimplified underconsumption theory. The "recovery" of 1936-37 was checked by another depression, according to the author, because the industrialist "stepped up prices and production too rapidly for the still weakened purchasing power of the public to absorb his output" (p. IX). To the author, crisis is always a case of "the underlying discrepancy between the ability of the producer to produce and the ability of the consumer to pay for the product" (page 267). To be sure, underconsumption is a factor of importance. Capitalism, by its very nature, creates a relative surplus of production by robbing the population that is employed, thus undermining the purchasing power of the people and narrowing the market for industrial output. As Marx put it:

"Since the aim of capital is not to minister to certain wants, but to produce profits, and since it accomplishes this purpose by methods which adapt the mass of production to the scale of production, not vice versa, conflict must continually ensue between the limited conditions of consumption on a capitalist basis and a production which forever tends to exceed its immanent barriers." (*Capital,* Vol. III, p. 301.)

But for Marx, underconsumption is merely one phase of the conflict of socialized production vs. private appropriation: one phase of the entire process of exploitation.

As pointed out by Engels (*Anti-Duhring,* p. 320), the underconsumption theory rests upon a fallacy. Underconsumption is characteristic for all modes of production that are based on exploitation, while crises, on the other hand, are peculiar only to the capitalist system of production. Underconsumption has been a constant factor in history for thousands of years, in all antagonistic social formations. Cyclical crises, however, are the distinguishing feature of capitalism alone. It is on the face of it scientifically incorrect to explain a development peculiar to capitalism only, by a constant factor which has been in effect for thousands of years. "It is like a

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mathematician attempting to explain the variation in the relation between two magnitudes, one constant and one variable, not by the variation of the variable but by the fact that the constant magnitude remains unchanged."

The part that underconsumption plays as one phase in the general conflict between productive forces and production relations under capitalism, which is the real cause of crises, is set forth classically in the following passage from Marx:

"Overproduction of capital never signifies anything else but overproduction of means of production—means of production and necessities of life—which may serve as capital, that is, serve for the exploitation of labor at a given degree of exploitation. . . . The conditions of direct exploitation and those of the realization of surplus value are not identical. They are separated logically as well as by time and space. The first are only limited by the productive power of society, the last by the proportional relations of various lines of production and by the consuming power of society. This last-named power is not determined either by the absolute productive power nor by the absolute consuming power, but by the consuming power based on antagonistic conditions of distribution, which reduces the consumption of the great mass of the population to a variable minimum within more or less narrow limits. The consuming power is furthermore restricted by the tendency to accumulate, the greed for an expansion of capital and a production of surplus-value on an enlarged scale. This is a law of capitalist production imposed by incessant revolutions in the methods of production themselves." (*Capital*, Vol. III, pp. 286-7, 300.)

* * *

Of a more serious nature are the errors of *Dividends To Pay* in the otherwise excellent chapters on "Multiple Monopoly" and "The Investor's Return on His Investment." The empirical material of the latter chapter leaves little to be desired. It exposes the absurdity of the position of the investor who when "he is not busy arguing about his '*rights*' to a so-called fair return on his investment . . . is even busier arguing about his risks" (p. 166). But the discussion of the fundamental principle of the falling rate of profit is distinctly unsound. Kennedy seems to consider the falling rate of profit from the point of view of the so-called law of diminishing returns: "As the investment in industry increases, the return on it tends to decrease" (p. 179). Kennedy seems not to have considered the question from the viewpoint of the organic composition of capital.

The return on increased investment is bound to decrease only if it causes a change in the organic composition of capital, in the sense that a larger proportion of it is invested in plant equipment and materials and a smaller portion goes to wages. As long as that share of the total investment that is devoted to wages is not reduced, the return on the investment or the rate of profit need not necessarily decline. Similarly, a rapid increase in labor productivity, reducing the necessary social labor for the replacing of labor power, will, other conditions be-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing equal, have the effect of increasing the rate of exploitation or the relative surplus value, thus counteracting the tendency of the rate of profit to decline.

As a result of this error the author hardly touches upon the real significance of the falling rate of profit and the effect it had on sharpening the antagonism between socialized production and private appropriation.

* * *

The chapter "Multiple Monopoly" satisfactorily proves the existence of monopoly, though there may be several presumably competing units in the same industry. For, as Kennedy shows, modern monopoly is in a position to eliminate competition even under conditions when it considers it inadvisable to eliminate nominal competitors. But both this chapter and that entitled "The Investor's Return on His Investment" show an insufficient understanding of the true role of monopoly as a factor in the stagnation of capitalism. It is not a mere question of the "price umbrella," as the author seems to suggest.

Monopoly capital interferes with the depreciation and liquidation of old capital which pave the way for new investments and for passing from depression to recovery. Thus Marx states:

"The capitalists who are actively engaged with their old capitals would keep as much of the new additional capital as will be in their hands in a fallow state in order to prevent a depreciation of their original capital and a crowding of its space within the field of production. Or they would employ it for the purpose of loading, even at a monetary loss, the necessity of keeping additional capital fallow upon the shoulders of new intruders and other competitors in general." (*Capital*, Vol. III, p. 296.)

Hence,

". . . as soon as the formation of capital were to fall into the hands of a few established great capitals, which are compensated by the mass of profits for the loss through a fall in the rate of profits, the vital fire of production would be extinguished, it would fall into a dormant state." (*Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 304.)

Here is the real cause of the permanent state of stagnation into which, as Kennedy correctly suggests, American capitalism is falling. And here, gentlemen of the National City Bank and of *Fortune*, is the answer to your questions as to why the upswing stops and production is curtailed long before capacity production has been reached, the unemployed absorbed, and consumption increased, as well as why this is an era of high savings and low investments.

* * *

In conclusion, we must not pass over the excellent chapter on the "False Fronts of Capitalism." In this chapter, Kennedy shows that every campaign of the industrialists against social legislation, that all their arguments against so-called burdensome taxes, that all the solemn warnings about the unbalanced budget, etc., are based "on the concealment of the real motives" (p. 221) in order to secure the high-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

est possible dividends; that they are nothing more than a false front, a conscious and planned attempt to deceive the people.

Capitalism has always presented a false face to the public. But during the upward stage of its development, its false fronts consisted in "promising universal prosperity provided he [the capitalist] were allowed unlimited profit." (p. 241.) Now, in the period of its decline, the spokesmen of capitalism no longer make promises. Today the industrialists make threats. "Unless given a free hand with labor" (p. 241), unless the Wagner Act is emasculated, social insurances, taxation for relief, etc., reduced to practically zero, the community is threatened with economic destruction.

Kennedy has little use for the various remedies suggested by the liberal reformists. "The reformer," says he, "tends to be a romanticist. He looks at the problems too much in terms of individuals and too little in terms of the issues involved" (p. 262). Kennedy is right when he maintains that "the liberal-minded person is often so far from being contemporary-minded and approaches the present situation with so little knowledge of its nature and complexity that he brings about discredit upon any form of thinking which is not entirely satisfied with the status quo" (p. 263). There is no denying, as Kennedy shows, that all such reformists' programs as those calling for the "unscrambling" of the "oversized" corporations into their component, allegedly competitive concerns, or aiming at the appointment of "paid public directors," are based on a failure to recognize the nature of the issues involved. May we add that this diagnosis equally applies to the very latest liberal program calling for a so-called "permanent N.E.P." for American industry, for "a mixed economy, an eternally pluralistic economy," for solving the contradictions of capitalism not by "final resolution" but by "a series of small interstitial pro-tem resolutions." (John Chamberlain, "Toward a Permanent N.E.P.," *New Republic*, Feb. 5, 1940.) *Dividends To Pay* is a real contribution towards the unscrambling of such pluralistic confusion.

Kennedy laughs out of court the suggestion that if the industrialists were given a free hand in a drive toward low wages and no unions, confidence would be restored and a revival of prosperity brought about. He correctly finds that capital is lying fallow, not because it was frightened about the New Deal, but because the overproduction of capital invested in industrial plant has created a barrier to further investment, making it difficult to find opportunities for new profitable employment of capital. *"The real barrier of capitalist production is capital itself."* (Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 293, italics in original.)

Very true, therefore, is the conclusion of the author:

"Even at its best period our [capitalist] system shone most brightly only when it was judged by its exceptions; there were only a few lucky numbers although they gave the lottery a good name. But now we have even fewer winners and the losers are very much worse off."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(p. 270.) Capitalism has reached a stage where depression is its normal state. At this stage of capitalist development "we live, breathe and have our being although over all hangs an atmosphere of terror—fear of a job, fear of a war, fear of the future and what the future may bring. It is remarkable how few companies and how few individuals are the beneficiaries of all this. A handful of large corporations—a handful of their large stockholders —for them the seed is planted and the harvest reaped. It does not matter how little the little man prospers. It does not matter how many farmers lose their farms. It does not matter how many people are jobless or how little those who have a job may make. These companies are in no position in our present social economy to deal with such matters —or, indeed, under any obligation to care about them—in a statesmanlike way. They have their profits to look after. They have their dividends to pay." (p. 273.)

THEODORE MILLER

LATEST BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED

BOOKS

The Civil War in the United States, by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, International Publishers, New York, New Edition. $2.50.

Native Son, by Richard Wright, Harper & Sons, New York. $2.50.

PAMPHLETS

The People Against the War-Makers, by Earl Browder, Workers Library Publishers, New York. 5c.

Social-Democracy and the War, by V. J. Jerome, Workers Library Publishers, New York. 5c.

Is This a War for Freedom? by Ernst Fischer, Workers Library Publishers, New York. 10c.

I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier for Wall Street! by Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Workers Library Publishers, New York. 1c.

Roosevelt Heads for War, by William Z. Foster, Workers Library Publishers, New York. 1c.

Lenin and Krupskaya, by C. Bobrovskaya, Workers Library Publishers, New York. 10c.

Jobs, Peace, Unity: John L. Lewis Speaks to Youth, Congress of Industrial Organizations, Washington, D. C.

No Career in No Man's Land, New York State Committee, Communist Party, New York, 5c.

Publications on Latin American Language and Literature in 1938, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.

The Monthly Review: A Journal of Theory and Practice of Marxism-Leninism, Vol. I, No. 1, Published Monthly by the Communist Party of Canada.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A MARXIST-LENINIST SURVEY OF WORLD POLITICS—

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Contents Number 2, 1940

ENGLAND DRIVES TO A NEW WORLD WAR
An Editorial

THIS IS LEON BLUM
By Maurice Thorez

STALIN ON THE NATIONAL AND COLONIAL QUESTION
By K. Oldner

STALIN'S TEACHINGS, A LODESTONE TO SPANISH COMMUNISTS
By Jose Diaz

REFLECTIONS ON AN ISSUE OF "NEUE VORWAERTS"
By K. Funk

And Other Articles

80 pages. Single copies 20c.
Subscription $2.00 per year

- -

Date .....

WORKERS LIBRARY PUBLISHERS
P. O. Box 148, Station D,
New York, N. Y.

Enclosed please find $2.00 for which please send me The Communist International for one year beginning with the

..... issue.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State .....

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A DISTINGUISHED SPRING LIST

FORTHCOMING BOOKS—

War and Revolution, by V. I. Lenin, Vol. XIX, Lenin's Collected Works

Why Farmers Are Poor: The Agricultural Crisis in America, by Anna Rochester

The South in Progress, by Katherine Lumpkin

Dialectics of Nature, by Frederick Engels

Salute to Spring, by Meridel Le Seuer

Shoes: The Industry and the Workers, by Horace Davis

●

FORTHCOMING PAMPHLETS—

The War and the Workers, by V. I. Lenin

Historical Materialism, by Frederick Engels

Dialectical and Historical Materialism, by Joseph Stalin

Lenin on Youth

Stalin on Youth

The Negro in the American Revolution, by Herbert Aptheker

The Role of the Individual in History, by George Plekhanov

●

Order from

WORKERS LIBRARY PUBLISHERS

P. O. Box 148, Station D, New York, N. Y.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED